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WHY I BELIEVE IN RELIGION

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WHY I BELIEVE IN RELIGION

BY

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DEAN OF THE DIVINITY SCHOOL, YALE UNIVERSITY

THE WASHINGTON GLADDEN LECTURES
FOR THE YEAR 1923

THE EARL LECTURES ON THE EDWIN T. EARL
FOUNDATION OF THE PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION FOR THE YEAR 1924.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

WASHINGTON GLADDEN

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, PROPHET OF SOCIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS, CHRISTIAN STATESMAN, A MAN OF FAITH AND HOPE AND LOVE

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

~~5783~~

FOREWORD

This book contains the first series of lectures delivered on the "Washington Gladden Foundation" in the First Congregational Church of Columbus, Ohio. It was the request of the Trustees that this initial set of lectures should deal with some of the fundamentals of Christian belief in popular rather than in technical terms.

The little volume is not for theologians or philosophers. There are whole shelves full of books which will match their moods and meet their needs as this one does not even attempt to do. It is brief in compass, written in a very plain hand and for everyday people.

It may seem presumptuous to undertake within such limits to deal with six broad planks in the platform of religion, any one of which might easily claim for itself a big thick volume of its own. Some critic may suggest that fools rush in where angels of wisdom reverently hesitate.

Well and good—so be it! Let it be borne in mind, however, that we are living in a world shot through with the spirit of haste. The quick lunch and the short story, the sharp ring at the telephone and the swift flight of the automobile, are thoroughly characteristic of this hurried life of ours. It is desirable that all things should be done decently and in order, but if they are to be done at all under present conditions they must be done with some measure of dispatch.

In the face of this insistent demand that a speaker or a writer should make his point, if he has one, and not be too long about it, I may be pardoned if I address my words more particularly to the man who frankly declares an unwillingness to make his way through intricate and extended discussions of the basis of our Christian faith. If I should succeed in enlisting his interest in this brief sketch of the reasons "Why I Believe in Religion," I shall count myself happy. It may be that a clear, concise statement of some of the main principles which underlie our common religious faith will find a place of usefulness, even though each one of the six main claims advanced has many more things to say for itself.

Three years ago I delivered the Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality at Harvard University. When I came to prepare the last lecture in this volume on "The Hope of Future Life," it seemed impossible for me to map out an entirely new line of approach in dealing with this belief. I have therefore, by the generous permission of the proper authorities, included in the sixth lecture a considerable part of the argument offered in the Ingersoll Lecture which was published under the title, "Living Again." I wish to thank the Harvard University Press for their courtesy in allowing me to use that material. I have extended the former discussion of the future life, adding other considerations which bear upon this hope. These lectures were also given in January, 1924, as the Earl Lectures in Berkeley, California, on the Edwin T. Earl Foundation of the Pacific School of Religion.

I wish to record my deep appreciation of the generous action of the Trustees of the Washington Gladden Foundation in honoring me with this invitation. It was my privilege to enjoy for many years the personal friendship

of that noble servant of God in whose memory this lectureship was established. I held him ever in such high esteem and such warm affection for his personal character and for his distinguished service to the cause of righteousness, that I wish these lectures might have been more worthy of their association with his name.

CHARLES R. BROWN.

Yale University,
April, 1923.

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WHY I BELIEVE IN RELIGION

WHY I BELIEVE IN RELIGION

I

THE BELIEF IN GOD

THE final forces in human society are always the spiritual forces. They decide the issue. They are sitting at this hour upon twelve thrones, judging the varied movements of this troubled life of ours and determining the outcome.

Here is a knife made of the finest tempered steel! It has an edge on it like that of a razor. There is no magical quality in the knife itself, giving it the power of life or of death. The knife is only a tool—the work it does depends entirely upon the moral purpose which wields it, upon the spiritual forces back of it. In the hands of a surgeon, wise, skillful, conscientious, the knife may readily be used to save life. It is being used to that high end every day in the year, in all the hospitals of earth. In the hands of a madman or a criminal the same knife may be just as readily used to destroy life. The knife at best is only an implement wielded for good or for ill by the spiritual forces which take it up.

Now all these forms of economic organization, all these political devices, all this machinery and the materials of modern civilization, are only tools. There is no magical quality in them which gives them the power of life or of

death. The question as to whether they shall make for human well-being or for human injury, turns entirely upon the quality of the spiritual forces which wield them. And you will all agree that in our systems of education and in our national culture, in our industrial methods and in our vocational training, we have been giving too much attention to the sharpening of our knives and all too little attention to the development of those qualities of mind and heart which would wield the knives aright.

The civilization of Central Europe did not go to smash in the summer of 1914, and in those fateful years which followed, for lack of brains. The disaster did not come because people did not know any better. Nor did it come from lack of wealth or of energy. The world had never been so rich nor so strong, in its ability to harness the elemental forces of earth and sky and sea to the task of human betterment, as it was in the opening decade of the Twentieth Century. The civilization of that fair and promising section of earth went to smash for lack of character. The people of Europe were not good enough to do the things which ought to have been done; they were not good enough to leave undone things which never should have been done. The failure of Europe lay in the fact that the people had not been emphasizing those lines of thought, of feeling and of purpose which are imperative for the maintenance of the spiritual forces of human society at their full vigor.

And the recovery of Europe to its normal estate in these strange, hard days, is being held back chiefly, not by a lack of money or of material, not by a lack of knowledge or of brains, wholesome and needful as all these things are in any social order. The recovery of Europe is held back mainly by the spirit of fear, of suspicion, of hatred

between man and man, between class and class, between land and land. The sorest need to-day is the need of a change of heart and a finer type of personal character. Has any generation in the whole history of the race ever written out in terms of action a more incisive commentary upon that ancient text "The wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God!" The final forces in human society are always the spiritual forces.

In my judgment the main hope for this torn and baffled world is to be found in religion. It puts first that which is first. It faces men in the right direction by an orientation of interest and desire which is valid. It calls upon them to seek first the rule of the divine spirit in their own hearts, to the end that all the other things demanded for worthy and joyous existence may be added in their proper order. And no other single force has entered so widely, so powerfully, so continuously into the renewal of the moral nature, into the shaping of men's ultimate ideals and into the formation of personal character as this sense of contact between the human and the divine.

Let me define religion as I shall use the term in these lectures! I shall put it broadly to include the religion of the Protestant, the Catholic, the Hebrew, the religion of honest, devout and aspiring men everywhere. Wherever you find a conscious, personal bearing toward a Being conceived of as divine, and the expression of that bearing in worship and in conduct ordered with reference to what is believed to be the will of that divine being, there you have religion.

It was a Hebrew singer who summed up his entire philosophy of life in a single pregnant phrase—"Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and

verily thou shalt be fed." He touched here four of the great main interests of mankind. Religious faith—"Trust in the Lord"! Humane service—"Do good"! Political stability—"So shalt thou dwell in the land"! Economic security—"Verily, thou shalt be fed." Faith and love, citizenship and employment, they may not entirely cover the ground but they cover a good share of it.

The interest of religion comes first and we believe that in our Christian faith we have religion in its highest form. Highest in its conception of God as a being of Holy Love, the Father in Heaven who made the supreme manifestation of Himself in One who taught and wrought in Galilee nineteen hundred years ago! Highest in its moral standards—we can think of no finer mode of life than a life lived according to the method and in the spirit of Jesus Christ! Highest in the goal at which it aims, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, the rule of the spirit that was in Christ in all our human affairs! Here is religion at its best according to our belief and we place it first among all the forces which make for human well-being.

"Trust in the Lord"—this is the way to begin! No man has learned the A, B, C's of right living until he has learned to do just that. Some one said to Frederick W. H. Myers, "If you could ask the Sphinx but one question and be sure of an answer, what would it be?" Quick as a flash his reply came—"Is the universe friendly?" The psalmist believed that the universe is friendly to right living and to all wholesome effort. Trust in the Lord and do good and you will have the final forces of earth and sky working steadily on your side. In this fundamental adjustment of effort to the huge, hard tasks which confront us, is to be found our best bid for that promised political stability and

economic security which belong to personal and social well-being.

Now the basic fact in religion is faith in God. We cannot have religion without God. We can have morals or ethics. But these carefully devised programs for human action lack the deeper source of motive and stimulus needed to nerve men for the hard tasks to which they are called. They lack that something which renews the springs of action and purifies the affections, which steadies and strengthens the will, which gives reach and grasp to aspiration and mightily reënforces every honest impulse. It was to men of faith that the ancient promise was made,—"One of you shall chase a thousand and two of you shall put ten thousand to flight." The author of those words was not writing an essay on *morale* but his psychology was sound. The man of faith, sure that God is with him and for him, faces the field undaunted. "The Lord of Hosts is with us! The God of Jacob is our refuge—therefore we will not fear.!"

I believe in God for three reasons. First, I believe in Him because I can explain the universe where I find myself and the process which I see in operation, better on that hypothesis than on any other. You will notice that I put it modestly. *Better*—I do not claim that this faith clears up all difficulties, solves all problems, leaves no unexplained remainders of questioning uncertainty. No more does any other hypothesis, atheism, materialism, mechanism or what not. I will back my hypothesis, that behind and within all these changing, puzzling phenomena there is a Being of Power, of Intelligence and of Moral Purpose, against all the other theories in the measure of mental and spiritual satisfaction which it affords, admitting frankly

that I still have upon my hands, as the other theorists have upon theirs, a bewildering mass of questions to which no satisfactory reply has yet been made.

I cannot prove by scientific demonstration that God is and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. But I get on better by accepting that great claim as a working hypothesis for my own life. I find also that my experience is the common experience of thoughtful men generally where they make full and persistent trial of the worth of that hypothesis. If this is not mathematical certainty—and I am frank to confess that it is not—it is sure enough to serve as a basis for action, in view of the fact that no other hypothesis, so far as I am aware, has thus far been offered which secures anything like such good results in personal and social well-being. The life of the world needs God in all its deepest intentions and highest aspirations.

I find myself in the presence of an orderly universe. The starry heavens declare the glory of God and the marvelous adaptations of these countless orders of life show His handiwork. How did it all come about? "It just happened," some one may reply. "Matter and force were here from the first and in some inexplicable way the great world order as we find it came to be." What a lame, inadequate explanation! The easy, shallow hypothesis breaks down under the weight of fact which it undertakes to explain.

You enter some large department store, Marshall Field's in Chicago, or Wanamaker's in Philadelphia. Here is order and system on every side! Here are men's wear, women's wear, children's wear, all in place! Here are carpets in one section, furniture in another, notions in

another! Here are books, toys, games and crockery all arranged with taste and skill!

"Who planned it?" you ask. I reply, "Nobody! There was neither intelligence nor purpose back of it. There was nothing but matter and force and somehow this noble emporium of trade came into existence." You listen to my lame conclusion and you laugh me to scorn.

You stand before some historic cathedral in the old world. Here are nave and transept, choir and altar, lofty arches and flying buttresses, with a glorious spire stretching away toward the sky and pointing the thoughts of men heavenward!

"Who planned it?" you ask. "Nobody," I reply. "It just happened. There was matter and force, huge quarries of stone in yonder hillside and the power of gravitation—and somehow this stately cathedral came into existence. Only credulity and superstition would posit intelligence and purpose back of it." Again you laugh me to scorn. You know better.

I look out upon this universe where we find ourselves, so much vaster, more majestic, more intricate, more awe-inspiring than all the creations which have come from man's hand and brain. I ask, "Who planned all this? How did it come to be?" And when the lame, the halt and the blind undertake to say to me, "There is no intelligence, nor moral purpose back of it; matter and force did it all," then I laugh at them. Swifter than a thought my mind goes back to those stately words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Bring me a better hypothesis, if you can!

Here we are on a globe which is moving swiftly through space on its appointed orbit and revolving upon its own

axis at the rate of a thousand miles an hour! I am stating it in round numbers—the earth turns around once in every twenty-four hours and at the equator it is approximately twenty-five thousand miles in circumference. While I am delivering this lecture we will all travel together a thousand miles to the east.

How did the earth get its initial velocity? How does it maintain that velocity undiminished? So far as we can discover there has been no slowing up through all the ages of recorded history—it seems contrary to the laws of Physics as we know them. I put these questions recently to one of the leading scientific men of this country. "What does Science have to say on these points?" I asked. He replied modestly, for he was a thoroughly scientific man, "Science does not say anything. We do not know anything about it." Well and good—the field is open then for that hypothesis which seems most reasonable.

Here we are on a globe which was once, as we are told, a molten mass of fire! It was lifeless, for no form of life could have endured for an instant in that blast furnace. Now we find it teeming with all these varied forms of vegetable and animal life. How did it come about? With all our advance in knowledge we know full well that we do not and cannot create life. Life begets life—there is no other method known to the mind of man. The whole Academy of Science, with all the splendid facilities in those laboratories which have meant so much for human welfare and progress, cannot make a single hen's egg which will hatch out into a chick. It takes the old hen to do that. The men in the laboratories know by careful accurate analysis the constituent elements in a hen's egg, albumin, lime, fat and all the rest. They have these ingredients in their laboratories but with all their knowledge and skill

they cannot put them together in such a way that the resultant egg will hatch.

How impossible then to attribute to matter and force, with no superintending intelligence and purpose back of them, the ability to create life and life with such marvelous potentialities in it as to produce at last unaided a Lincoln, a Shakespeare, a Plato! Picture it to yourselves!

How did that life gain its inception? Here in those distant æons before there was any form of life upon the globe, the sixty-seven or ninety-two original atoms or electrons or isotopes or whatever you may call them—they smell the same by any name—set themselves to the high and hard task of creating life, which our men of science with all their splendid facilities and knowledge find themselves unable to do! And these sixty-seven or ninety-two atoms succeeded! They, possessing neither intelligence nor purpose, nor even life itself, set in operation those evolutionary processes which we know to-day! The very claim set forth in these bald terms is so lacking in reasonableness as to stagger our credulity. Atoms created life! Discriminating intelligence spurns the weakness of such a claim in one terse phrase, "Why seek the living among the dead?"

Hear these plain straight words from Arthur J. Balfour, competent alike in philosophy and in statesmanship. "How was it that the blind collision of molecules, atoms and sub-atoms in the remote past issued as a mere question of cause and effect in the production of knowledge and science? How from such beginnings could they expect such conclusions? Those who take the naturalistic view of knowledge must explain how unreason produced reason. They must try to tell us, how this purposeless clash of atoms, as one of its accidental by-products, turned out

beings so constituted that they could look back and discuss the utter insufficiency and inefficiency of their own pedigree. They must bring in at the beginning of the process (transfusing it from beginning to end with some form of reason) some element of purpose, or design—to use an old-fashioned and perhaps unjustly discredited word—in some shape or other. Theism must be an indubitable portion of any system which claims to get out of the blind causation of rational results. Not to mince matters, if they want to see the world in which we all believe, and to hold the creed which we all accept in its most rational form, they must assume guidance and inspiration from the beginning."

Here we are in a world where the fact of progress is undeniable! In our study of geology by careful scrutiny of the fauna and flora we can go back to a period where only the lower forms of marine life had come into being. We move on down through ages of development to those periods where the highest forms of life were those huge and brutish creatures known to us through their fossil remains and standing in such glaring contrast to the higher forms we know to-day. They were the best that earth could show. We move on down until in comparatively recent times, geologically speaking, man appeared. But what a man! With hairy limbs, sloping forehead and the barest rudiments of mental and moral life, he seems to us scarcely worthy to be enrolled as a human ancestor. Yet he marked a long step in advance of those lower and cruder forms of life which held sway before he came.

Here was progress! And from these humble beginnings of human life, we move along until we reach the confines of recorded and verifiable history. Progress all

the way! And from these semi-savage, all but brutish beginnings of the human race, we trace this age-long advance to man's estate as we know it now.

Who planned and directed this marvelous advance from the lowest forms of sentient being up to the very summit of existence as we know it? These human beings, which make bold to look up into the face of the Infinite and claim kinship with him, stand apparently at the climax of the process. Who planned it and by his own intelligent direction made it possible? "Nobody," you answer. "Matter and force did it all." Surely you do not expect men generally to take such an answer seriously.

It was Henri Bergson, one of the foremost philosophers of the Twentieth Century, who wrote, "I see in the whole evolution of life on our planet a crossing of matter by a creative consciousness, an effort to set free by force of ingenuity and invention something which in the animal still remains imprisoned and is only finally released when we reach man." Evolution is not the unpacking of a suitcase which from the beginning contained in material form all the unrealized factors in this dynamic and vital order which we face to-day. There is something creative and purposeful present and operative, throughout the entire process.

If a ship at sea is sailing strongly and steadily in a certain direction, not wafted hither and yon by the chance of wind and wave but holding its course, skillfully tacking in its use of whatever wind may blow and making port, you decide at once that there is a pilot aboard. There is intelligent purpose directing the course of that ship. The ship itself (matter and force, as represented by the material structure of the ship and the wind and the waves), would never do it alone. In like manner when I look

out upon this universe voyaging through time and space, making port after port in its resistless advance and onward progress, I too know beyond a peradventure that there is a pilot aboard. There is intelligent purpose at the wheel. God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, worketh in this process of advance even until now, and will forever work.

Materialism is sometimes wrought out into a definite system and put forward as an adequate interpretation of the world order. More often, however, it is just a mental habit. Certain minds fall into the way of thinking that Matter and Force, provided the words are properly equipped with capital letters, are sufficient to account for everything. In that naïve idolatry of these home-made deities great numbers of undiscriminating people live and move without ever quite reaching the level of having intellectual being.

The trouble with idols, whether they are made of wood or of words, is that they have no independent existence apart from the toil or the imaginings of the men who make them. They are but the creatures of the misdirected carving, coloring or thinking of men. In open contrast to that whole attitude of mind, men of theistic faith believe in and worship the living God. They believe in One who lives and moves and has His being, whether we think about Him, and believe in Him, and obey Him or not. He shows Himself alive.

I believe in evolution, as most thoughtful men do. It would seem to me that William Jennings Bryan is unhappily spending the closing decades of an upright and moderately useful life in a perfectly sincere but entirely futile attempt to discredit some of the main positions of

modern Science. The words employed by Huxley in characterizing a certain disturber of the peace of Israel in his day, might well, as Francis G. Peabody has suggested, be applied to Mr. Bryan. "A man of restless and versatile intellect who not content with an equivocal success in his own sphere, actively plunges into scientific questions with which he has no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric and to distract the attention of his hearers from the real point at issue by eloquent digressions and skilled appeals to religious prejudice."

But Evolution, even when it is accorded the courtesy of a large capital E, does not create anything nor do anything. It is merely a convenient, and, as I think, a substantially accurate, designation for the general method according to which the Creative Energy develops and maintains the whole mighty process which enfolds us and bears us on. The idea of cosmic evolution suggests an age-long, sky-wide process of unfolding and becoming, rather than a startling array of creative jerks and jumps, as best portraying the method observed by the Maker of heaven and earth. The carpenter and wood box conception of creation was long ago relegated to the attic. We think to-day of a dynamic, mobile, progressive world-order steadily created from within, something as the life principle working from within builds the body of a man. "The universe is not a machine but an organism with an indwelling principle of life. It was not made but it has grown."

I am quite ready to admit that my working hypothesis does not by any means explain everything nor clear up all my difficulties. With the light that I now possess, I am

free to say that if I had been creating the universe, I should have left out some things which are very much in evidence. I can see neither value nor meaning in mosquitoes or rattlesnakes, in germs of tuberculosis or of cancer, in San Francisco earthquakes or in Chinese famines caused by drought or the overflow of great rivers.

But my judgment is based upon data confessedly incomplete. When I was a ten year old boy some of my earthly father's actions, as they bore upon my personal comfort or discomfort, did not seem to me either reasonable or morally defensible. But I outgrew that immaturity of judgment. I lived to thank him and to thank God for those disciplinary experiences which in their outcome were altogether wholesome. Here in the presence of this mighty world order, with its gigantic interests and problems, I confess myself a ten-year-old. I am waiting for more light and for added maturity of judgment before I render a final verdict. And until some one can bring me a more satisfactory hypothesis upon which to explain this orderly universe, the presence of life and the fact of progress, I shall continue to affirm my own belief in those historic words, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."

In the second place I believe in God because He is demanded by the spiritual element in human nature. When I look within, I find in my own nature the sense of dependence, the feeling of moral accountability, the impulse to worship. I find a longing for the sense of fellowship with a Being, greater, wiser and holier than I am, greater, wiser, holier than any of my associates. In a word, my soul is athirst for God; it cries out for the living God.

When I turn to my fellow beings in their hours of thoughtfulness and of aspiration, I find that these experiences of mine are shared by them. "Cities without walls, cities without libraries, cities without schools, cities without music, cities without art, but never a city without its place of worship," the anthropologist has told us. These places of worship are everywhere. The moods which created them belong to all races of men.

How were these spiritual impulses and faculties produced and developed? Does this sense of dependence, this feeling of moral accountability, this desire to worship have no objective reality standing over against it? Do all these spiritual impulses lead us into blind alleys? Do they send out the best that the moral nature of man can show upon fools' errands? Do they mock us by impelling us to look up with reverent, obedient trust into a realm of Being where there is no one to answer to our quest? If such a wild claim were true, we should come here upon an utter break in the great world-order as we have come to know it.

Hear the argument of John Fiske! He had learned his way about both in the world of scientific investigation and in the world of speculative inquiry. Charles Darwin called him "the ablest exponent of the doctrine of evolution on the American continent." He began as a materialist but along the line of scientific procedure, he became a pronounced Theist, an active believer in the realities of the spiritual life and in the immortality of the soul.

"I find everywhere," says this distinguished evolutionist, "that the internal adjustment has been brought about so as to harmonize with some actually existing external fact. The eye was developed in response to the outward existence of radiant light; the ear to respond to the out-

ward existence of acoustic vibrations; the mother's love came in response to the infant's needs. If the relation established in the morning twilight of man's existence between the human soul and a world invisible and immaterial is a relation of which only the subjective term is real and the objective term is non-existent, then I say it is something entirely without precedent in the whole history of creation."

In a word, if man's capacity for fellowship with God is real only at our end of the line and unreal at the other end, then it is an utter break in the whole method discovered in the uniformity of nature. "The lesson of evolution therefore is that through all these weary ages the human soul has not been cherishing in religion a delusive phantom but in spite of seemingly endless groping and stumbling, it has been rising to a recognition of its essential kinship with the ever living God."

The organism developed the eye because it needed it. It could not live so well without it. It must have eyes because there was light and there were objects to be recognized and studied. The organism developed the ear because it needed it—it could not live so well without it, because there were acoustic vibrations, sounds to be heard, language, music and all the rest to be utilized and enjoyed. The organism developed the power of speech—it could not live so well without it. Fellowship and coöperation would be all but impossible where men could not talk. The organism developed the tender, sacrificial love of the mother for the helpless child, because it needed it. It could not live and advance without it. The helplessness of infancy was waiting for the protection and nurture which only that maternal affection could supply.

In like manner human nature developed the religious sense with all its varied functions because it needed it. It could not live so well without it. And here as everywhere, according to my belief, the great objective reality in religion, God the Father, from whom the whole family of developing men is named, stands over against the highest of all our human faculties.

"I cannot believe that the law and order of things fails at the top: and that while we live in a real world in our physical relationships and a true world in our mental action, we live only in a lie or a vacuum in the insights and confidences of the soul."

The test of religious faith is to be found precisely where we find the tests applied to the claims of music, of art, of literature. We test them by their power to contribute to the full and joyous development of ideal existence for our common humanity. By their fruits we know—it was the Master of the highest values in life who proposed this pragmatic test for the claims of any system which made appeal for our acceptance.

I am content that religion should stand or fall by the results of that same test. Has it the power to contribute to the well-rounded and satisfying development of the higher interests of human life? We hold that it has, and that God, the ground and source of all finite existence, the Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness, the Helper and Finisher of these faulty, incomplete lives of ours, is demanded by the spiritual element in human nature.

The highest and most significant factor in human life is to be found not in any technical skill of hand or of brain—it is to be found in the ability of that life to make response to great principles and great ideals, in its ability to be

kindled and empowered for great action by faith and hope and love; in a word, in its ability to show itself responsive to the spirit of the living God who speaks through all these things to the soul of man. And man is the only being on earth, so far as we know, who has this power to hear, to understand and to make reply in terms of reverent obedient trust and of noble, unselfish action.

The message of religion is not only a word of duty uttered from above, it is also the word of highest privilege uttered from within. "If thou wouldst enter into *life,* keep the commandments." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy strength." This is the first and great imperative for every man who would "enter into life." The spiritual element in mankind demands God and the sense of fellowship with Him for its own complete self-realization.

In the third place I believe in God because Jesus Christ believed in God. I am not here falling back upon a religion of authority. I ceased many years ago to believe in any sort of religion which bases its claims upon external authority. Those claims do not get us anywhere.

It is easy for any one to test this principle for himself. Here is a devout Roman Catholic who tells us that he has found the rest of faith, that peace of mind and heart which we all crave, by accepting the authority of his church. He believes in the infallibility of the Pope. When the honored head of his church has spoken authoritatively upon any question of faith or of morals, he has only to accept that pronouncement and act upon it to find rest to his soul.

But all that is merely the act of an ostrich hiding his head in the sand and refusing to be disturbed by any

untoward sights which might trouble his vision. Before this devout man can find any comfort in trusting himself to the infallible decision of the Pope, he must be himself infallibly sure that it is the Pope who is infallible, and not the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly, or the President of the United States, or William Jennings Bryan, all of whom take quite another view of many matters upon which the Popes have spoken. The believer must, by the exercise of his own reason, decide that it is the Pope who is infallible and therefore worthy of his final confidence before he gains his satisfaction. And that throws the whole question back upon the moral judgment of the man himself where it belongs and where it must forever remain.

The Protestant with his high claims touching the authority of the Bible is in identically the same position. He may maintain that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inerrant, and therefore worthy of our complete and final confidence. He may announce that he stands ready to submit all questions of faith and conscience to the infallible teaching of the Scripture. If any valid conclusion can be established by the words of Holy Writ, he may insist that he can find rest to his soul by trusting all his interests to that authoritative word.

But before the devout Protestant can find any comfort in believing in the infallibility of the Scriptures, he must himself be infallibly sure that it is our Bible rather than the sacred book of the Moslem, the Koran, or the sacred books of the Hindu or the Buddhist, which is worthy of that complete and final trust. If there remains any wriggle of doubt in his own mind on that point he is still out in the open where all the winds of uncertainty may blow

upon him. And that question as to the inerrancy of the holy Scriptures of our particular faith is a question which each man must decide for himself and at his own risk. This plain fact leaves the Protestant and his Bible precisely where the Roman Catholic, who recognizes the necessity of making sure first of all that it is the Pope who is infallible, is left.

The same principle applies to the man who would make the teaching of Christ the court of last appeal. We hear men say that if we can ascertain the mind of Christ upon any question of faith or of conduct, then we shall have an authority from which there can be no appeal.

But all aside from the difficulty of arriving at the exact meaning of Christ in these words which have come down through the imperfect hands and brains of His reporters, this claim also fails to relieve any one from the responsibility of deciding for himself that it is Jesus Christ rather than Mahomet or Gautama or Confucius who is worthy to receive such credence and devotion. How are we to affirm that Jesus Christ knew the truth about God and man and their relations as none other who ever walked this common earth has known them, except by the exercise of our faculties of investigation, comparison and appraisal. It all comes back to the exercise of personal judgment. The man who believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God in a sense altogether unique has still upon his hands the responsibility of making decision touching the place or the person where he will offer his final allegiance.

All this is so plain as to be commonplace to those who are accustomed to think clearly on this subject of religious authority. Even so, if Jesus cannot become the final

authority to any man except by the man's own judgment and choice, He may nevertheless speak to us all as a great exponent of religious truth. He may offer us expert testimony touching the interests of the inner life. We value expert counsel in all the other fields of human interest. If Edison can speak as one having wisdom touching the problems of electricity, if Pasteur and Metchnikoff can guide us safely touching bacilli and the germ theory of disease, if Beethoven can pronounce a conclusive judgment touching what is most worthy in melody and harmony, then surely Jesus Christ is entitled to be heard with the greatest consideration touching all questions of morals and religion.

When we study the quality of his utterance, the accuracy of his spiritual insight in all those fields where his claims can be submitted to the test of experience, the character of the life he lived in the eyes of men and the wholesome, abiding influence he has exerted upon the higher life of mankind, we find no one to whose judgment we might so well defer in matters of religious faith as this same Jesus.

What did He think about God? Was He an Atheist? Would He have been ready to accept the claims of materialism? Would He have believed that "matter and force" are adequate to account for all that we find here before our eyes and minds and hearts? In the face of His teaching, which has gone out through all the earth and in the presence of His words, which have reached to the ends of the world, the very asking of such questions seems almost absurd.

He believed in God with all His mind and soul. His first recorded word was, "I must be in my Father's house and about my Father's business." His whole life was

lived in an unbroken sense of fellowship with God—"I am not alone, the Father is with me." His deeds were done in harmony with what He believed to be the will of God—"I come not to do mine own will but the will of Him who sent me." And when He hung upon the Cross His last word was, "Father, forgive them." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He was as sure of God, as He was of His own existence.

Suppose for the sake of argument that He did not know, that He was merely giving us His opinion touching these august questions! Suppose that He was not the Son of God in a sense altogether unique, but only a wise and good man who told us what he had come to believe touching these matters! Even on that lower level of offered premise, whose opinion would you rather trust than His? Where in all recorded history will you find one whose judgment you would rather follow?

We might well make wider application of those words, "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus," than that suggested by the Apostle in his letter to the people at Philippi. Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus touching the Being, the Character and the Purpose of God! You cannot do better. We feel ourselves in good company when we find ourselves with Him in thought, in desire, in ordered action.

"Here is the last great certainty," Phillips Brooks said to the men at Harvard! "Be sure of God! By simple loving worship, by purifying yourselves even as He is pure, by continual moral obedience, creep close to Him, keep close to Him. Be sure of God, and in the end nothing can overthrow you." Jesus Christ was very sure of God.

"The evidential strength of Theism lies not in any single proof but in the collective force of the various evidences which are producible in its favor." The mind, the heart and the will unite in crying out for the living God because they cannot find satisfaction in anything less. "History," said Canon Liddon, "does not smile upon the materialistic attempts to bribe the religious yearnings of the soul of man. Atheism could on one fatal day enthrone a prostitute as the Goddess of Reason upon the high altar of a Christian Cathedral. But it was one thing to obey the wild fanaticism of the Jacobin clubs and quite another thing permanently to control the heart and convictions even of the light-hearted multitudes of Paris."

The whole ghastly attempt to replace the verities of Christian worship by this godless parody was only a nine days' wonder at best. The ten day week, which was to displace the division of time upon which both the Hebrew and the Christian faiths have set their seal, and the shallow adoration of a handsome young courtesan, who undertook to personify reason, went speedily by the board. It is only a question of time (and not a very long time at that) until the mind and the heart of the thoughtful elements of society cry out for the living God.

I do not offer these considerations as proofs of the existence and character of the God in whom I trust. I have read many books on Theism and have "heard great argument about it and about." It all left me with the feeling that the Being of God cannot be demonstrated as a mathematician can demonstrate that two and two make four or that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. It was an eminent philosopher who once said, "There is an element of faith and volition in all our theorizing. Where we cannot prove, we believe. Where

we cannot demonstrate, we choose sides. This element of faith cannot be escaped in any field of thought and without it the mind is helpless and dumb. The conclusion therefore is that Theism is the fundamental postulate of our total life. It cannot indeed be demonstrated without assumption. But it cannot be denied, without wrecking all our interests." Let those men who, spiritually speaking, are freezing to death in the dark, take notice and govern themselves accordingly!

Let me raise one other question,—How shall we think about God? "When I was a child, I thought as a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child." We all did. It was the only way we could think at that stage of our development. I thought of God as a tall, elderly gentleman with long white hair and beard, something like my grandfather, who was a very handsome old man. I thought of Him as standing yonder among the clouds of Heaven, watching people, watching me, particularly when I had been doing something wrong. I pictured him as standing commonly at a high desk with the Recording Angel near by carefully putting down in huge celestial volumes those sins which were constantly being committed by his erring children under his own all-seeing eyes. It was a picture not in any sense ridiculous to my childish mind but filled to the very edge with the power of moral restraint.

But "when I became a man I put away childish things," as all sensible people do, to make room for a more mature philosophy of life. I learned to think of God as resident, immanent in all these mighty processes which express His power and purpose—gravitation, heat, light, electricity, the movement of the planets, the growth of plant life, the growth of animal life, the growth and progress of human

life. His Infinite Being finds ceaseless expression in this continuous creation. All these mighty processes are modes of His energy. They enfold us and bear us on, for in Him we live and move and have our being, as fish live in the sea.

How inadequate these human terms are to express our idea of the Infinite Being, to whom we look up, every thoughtful man is perfectly aware. Our minds are not built on a scale to surround and define the One whose very name and nature preclude the possibility of setting up metes and bounds to locate and enclose Him. The old familiar earth which was "given to the children of men" we come in some slight measure to understand, but "the heavens are the Lord's." When we have done our best our views scarcely amount to a drop in the bucket. We cannot in the nature of the case get the infinite ocean of being into our half-pint bottles of theological definition.

Even so, if we are to think at all about fundamental questions, we have to think in human terms—there are no other terms to be had. We have to do what we can with these gigantic problems, with the full consciousness of our mental limitations thick upon us. We feel all the while that "the language of religion," as a wise critic once said, "is not rigid, fixed, scientific, but fluid, passing, literary." We know that our loftiest statements are "thrown out" as it were at august realities confessedly too vast and too rich for complete comprehension or for any sort of final formulation.

When I seek to picture to myself this Being whom we call God, I think of Him as standing in something of the same relation to the universe that I sustain to my physical body. "God is spirit," unseen, pervasive, controlling. In the last analysis I, too, am spirit, made in his likeness and image. I dwell here in this body which is my own par-

ticular cosmos. I am omnipresent in this little universe of mine—if you were to stick a pin into me at any point I should feel it. I can wink my eyes, move my fingers and wiggle my toes. I express the content and quality of my being through the various functions and movements of this body. Its varied activities, voluntary and involuntary, are modes of my indwelling energy.

In some such way I think of God as inhabiting the entire cosmos. He is present in every part of this universe. His Infinite Spirit dwells in, sustains and directs all. His mind and purpose find expression in all lives where He is not thwarted by a disobedient will. He is everywhere. I never expect to be any nearer to God than I am at this moment. I could not be, for the reason that He is everywhere. I hope to become more keenly and steadily conscious of His presence, as I become purer in heart. The analogy I have used here is only a poor inadequate illustration but it may help some mind to feel more vividly the nearness of the divine.

I think of Him always as possessed of moral character. We find moral life in this race of men. We find that human beings do not always follow "the line of least resistance" nor act solely from "the spirit of enlightened self-interest." They show fidelity to a sense of duty, capacity for sacrifice when ends higher than those of personal comfort and advantage are to be served, humane impulses which carry them to all lengths in their unselfish ministry to pain and need. We find that for some reason this stream of moral life has broadened, deepened and moved more strongly, as the ages have come and gone.

Does it seem reasonable to affirm that this stream of moral life in the race originated itself, persisted in the

face of obstacles unspeakable, increased and purified its flow, with no moral life in the force or forces which lie back of it? The stream does not rise higher than its source. The effect can never be greater than the cause which gave it being. When I study the age-long persistence and progress of the moral life of man, I should be put to permanent intellectual confusion did I not also believe in the moral character of the One who stands responsible as Maker of heaven and earth.

I can best think of Him as a Being of Holy Love. Holiness apart from love is cold, negative, futile. Love apart from holiness becomes soft and sentimental, a mere mush of good nature. The two qualities taken together give us character at its best, prophetic of that whole disciplinary order which makes for high character in the lives of those who are brought under its tuition. In this quest for a satisfying concept of the moral character of the One whom I adore, I can find none better than to think of Him as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

When I was in Japan I went naturally to Kamakura to look upon the great bronze statue of Buddha. The serene beauty of this work of art has been too oft described to need any word of mine. The dignity of the majestic figure, the look of peace and ineffable calm upon the face, the air of repose which meets the hurried, thoughtless tourist as if to hush him into reverence and meditation—all these aspects of the statue are instantly apparent.

But as an effort at the portrayal of ideal life or of the divine, the statue was profoundly disappointing. The figure is seated; the arms are folded; the eyes are closed. It is the calm of death.

The God in whom I believe is not sitting down—He is on his feet, alert, active, militant. His arms are not folded—now they are stretched out to help and relieve, now they are tense in their combat with evil. His eyes are not closed—He that watcheth over all these interests infinitely precious in His sight neither slumbers nor sleeps. He is the living God. He is living at this hour an active, vigilant, redemptive life. He will forever live and act until He has put all his enemies under His feet and has made all the kingdoms of human interest kingdoms of His Christ!

II

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

HOWEVER it came about, the new faith won its victories in the first century, not by proclaiming a finer form of philosophy to minds bewildered or repelled by the crude notions of Greek and Roman mythology. It won its victories not by urging upon the consciences of men a nobler and more searching system of ethics to replace the easy-going moral conventions which were current. It won its victories by preaching Christ.

Here was the leading apostle of that aggressive faith indicating the main content of His message! "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Gentiles foolishness, but to them who are called, the power of God and the wisdom of God." "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome . . . I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes." This was the sum and substance of what he had to offer for the moral need of the world.

Now what did it mean to this man to "preach Christ?" What does it mean now? It would mean naturally, we might say, a clear-cut statement of the main facts of Christ's earthly career. It would include the setting forth

of the leading principles and commanding ideals in His teaching. It would also include the portrayal, in some vivid and effective way, of the moral perfection of His life as a matchless example to which the conduct of men everywhere might well conform.

But when we study the sermons and letters of those early apostles we find that all this had small place in their utterance. As Professor Bacon said in his address at the Centenary of the Yale Divinity School, "Christianity did not arise out of the admiration felt by Paul or by the Galilean disciples for Jesus as a teacher. They scarcely mention the fact that he was a teacher, still less consider that he presented a new system of ethics. Christianty arose out of what men believed to be the act of God." God was in Christ doing something on our behalf. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." The apostles went everywhere preaching something which God had done for them which issued in their salvation. This was their gospel. The Christ they proclaimed was no mere teacher or example or leader—He was, as they viewed it, their Redeemer and Lord.

This plain historic fact brings us face to face with the question, Who was Jesus Christ? Who is He and what is He now? Is He anything more than the memory of a wise and good man gone to His reward? Can men speak to Him or pray to Him as they did in days of old when He walked this common earth? Can He enter into any such relations with us as those which He sustained to the sinful and needy people of Galilee?

This is no mere idle speculation—it is a question of immediate and significant fact. The question which He asked when He stood there at Caesarea Philippi looking

into the eyes of His friends, "Whom do men say that I am?" comes echoing its way across the centuries and it will not down. It challenges every thoughtful man to make some sort of valid reply. Who is Jesus Christ?

And that fundamental inquiry touching the estimate to be placed upon the person of Christ has furnished a battlefield across which the troops of proof texts and of logic, of daring speculation and of plodding common sense, have advanced and retreated with all the honors or dishonors of theological war. How could one born of a woman, subject to the laws of growth, tempted in all points like as we are, compelled to learn obedience by the things which He suffered, destined to die upon the Cross, be anything but a man and only a man? This has seemed to certain minds the only possible conclusion to which an honest and intelligent man could come.

But other men of equal intelligence and candor, facing the same set of facts, have brought in quite another estimate of His person. "Why should this man have such things said about Him as that 'in Him all things consist,' that 'in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,' that He was 'the express image of the divine person,' unless He had indeed made such an impression upon the apostles that no lower terms would serve?" And this other theory, which many thoughtful men cherish as to the person of Christ, "is like a great cathedral, beautiful for worship, great for service, sublime as a retreat from the tumult of the world—and, forever unfinished."

It may seem to some of you altogether futile to open up afresh this subject of age-long controversy.

> "Myself when young did eagerly frequent
> Doctor and saint, and heard great argument

About it and about; but evermore came out
By the same door wherein I went."

Here Omar, the Oriental cynic, voices his contempt for the futility of human thought when applied to the deeper issues of life. And those other lines of his are equally familiar:

"The moving finger writes and having writ
Moves on; nor all your piety and wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."

Here he sets down his judgment as to the futility of all our efforts at moral recovery or redemption.

I would place over against that first sneer the words of Jesus—"I am the truth and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The spirit of truth who is the Holy Spirit shall guide us into all truth. And over against the second sneer I would set the words of prophet and apostle, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, thought they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." "He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by Him." "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!"

"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love
Whom we that have not seen thy face
By faith and faith alone embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove."

Two views—broadly speaking—as to the person of Jesus Christ have held the major part of the attention of mankind. There has been the easier and lower view—I do not use the terms "lower" and "higher" as con-

veying anything either of moral reproach or of moral approval but merely as suggesting different levels of appraisal. According to this lower view Jesus Christ was simply a great man, possibly the wisest, the best and the greatest man who ever lived. He was a matchless teacher, one who spake as never man spake. He was a perfect example of purity and kindliness, of heroism and unselfish devotion. He had that moral courage which stops at nothing, standing ready to go to the Cross for an ideal, thereby sealing His convictions as to what was supreme in life by His own blood. And moreover He manifested in an unusual measure the divine character, so that men saw something, they saw much, of God in Him.

I do not feel that I have stated this lower view unfairly —I wish to include in it all the excellence which belongs to it. But when the returns are all in, it means that with all His admirable qualities of mind and heart Jesus Christ was only a man standing altogether within the human categories. It means that to worship Him, or pray to Him, or to speak of having fellowship with Him, in any other sense than that according to which we may enjoy a certain mystic communion with Francis of Assisi or John Wesley, with Phillips Brooks or Washington Gladden, would be an act either of idle sentiment or of gross superstition. It would make impossible the singing, with any measure of sincerity, of such hymns as "My Faith looks up to thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary" or "O Master, let me walk with thee." According to this view Jesus Christ is a good man to be held in high esteem and loving memory because of what He was nineteen hundred years ago and He is nothing more than that.

Then there is the higher view of Christ's person. According to this view Jesus Christ was indeed "the Son of

Man," the perfect embodiment of all that is essentially and eternally human. But He was also in a sense unique, the Son of God. He has for us all the religious value of God. He so manifested the divine character that having seen Him we have seen the Father. In Him the Eternal became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. He died upon the Cross but straightway "He showed Himself alive." He is alive now and lives eternally, entering into what we may fitly call cosmic relations with the moral universe. He is One whom men may adore, One to whom we may pray, One who is capable of sustaining such personal relations with you, with me and with that man across the aisle as He sustained with Peter and James and John when they were recovered from moral unworthiness into newness of life. He is in the most vital sense known to the mind of man Savior, Redeemer and Lord. "In Him there was active in the world the Eternal Spirit of God and in Him also we touch the divine humanity which was always in the Godhead but was only made fully manifest when the word became flesh and dwelt among us."

I hold strongly to this higher view. I regard it as an essential element in the Christian message to the world. I do not believe that Jesus Christ takes His place beside us over against God to struggle, to pray, to gain His sense of peace and worth as best He may. I believe that He takes His place with God for us as an abiding redemptive force, the greatest force that the Almighty One has ever put forth for our recovery from the guilt, the stain and the power of evil. I look up with Stephen and see Him "standing at the right hand of God." And when the hour of death draws near, I am ready to cry with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

The grounds upon which great bodies of Christian believers base their conviction as to the proper estimate to be placed upon the person of Christ are too many to be discussed within the limits of this hour. I may, however, briefly indicate three considerations which lead me to hold the higher view.

First, the central and commanding position assumed by and accorded to Jesus Christ in the work of human redemption. The arguments made in the past which were based upon the miracles ascribed to Him do not seem to me to carry much weight. The whole approach to those narratives which contain a miraculous element has been reversed since the night when a master in Israel is reported to have said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God because no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with Him." In these days where thoughtful men believe in the miracles of Christ, they do it chiefly because the power of His personality, as expressed in His character and teaching, has so impressed itself upon them as to prepare their minds to believe that the great natural order which enfolds us may have made to Him a response altogether exceptional. They believe in His miracles because they first believed in Him.

They have attained that finer form of faith suggested in the second chapter of the Fourth Gospel. "Now when He was in Jerusalem during the feast, many believed on Him because of the works that he did. But Jesus did not trust Himself to them." He did not place much reliance upon a faith which rested upon "signs and wonders"—it did not go deep enough.

And the value of the older argument based upon the claim that He fulfilled in Himself certain ancient Hebrew prophecies seems to me almost negligible. The more

thorough and accurate scholarship applied to those ancient writings has made clear the fact that many of the "fulfilments" confidently urged upon us in the past were altogether fanciful. The veriest amateurs in competent Biblical interpretation to-day would smile if they were urged to believe in the divinity of Christ on the ground of that ancient expectation that a Virgin would conceive and bear a son and call his name "Immanuel." The men who know their right hands from their left, taking them by and large, have moved entirely away from that whole method.

But the fact remains that Jesus Christ did not stand before men as a great religious teacher pointing away from Himself to some other and higher source of help for their moral recovery. On the contrary, He sought to fix the eyes, the interest and the confidence of men upon Himself. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you . . . Learn of me and ye shall find rest to your souls." "The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins." "All things are delivered unto me of my Father and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him."

The vital significance of the words last quoted has long been recognized. Attempts have been made to discredit the genuineness of this passage but we have the authority of no less a scholar than Professor William Sanday of Oxford for affirming its rightful place in the Synoptic tradition. "This passage is one of the best authenticated in the Synoptic Gospels. It is found in exact parallelism in both Matthew and Luke and is therefore known to have been part of the collection of discourses which many

critics believe to be the oldest of all the evangelical documents." When once we grant the authenticity of this passage, there is nothing in the estimate placed upon the person of Christ in the fourth gospel and in the Epistles which is not here anticipated and reënforced.

Here was One who made bold to stand before men as Savior and Lord because He felt Himself sinless and therefore competent to open the gates of eternal life. He challenged men to convict Him of moral unworthiness. No one did, no one could. We find no confession of fault, no words of penitence, no prayer for personal forgiveness falling from those august lips. He was not afraid to say "Follow me." He bade men enter upon the way of peace and worth by denying themselves, taking up their crosses and following Him. How far all this is from the bearing of the saintliest man we know in the whole history of the Christian church!

He affirmed that He would sit upon the throne in all His glory judging the moral success or failure of mankind. Before Him all nations would be gathered and He would separate them on the basis of their worthiness or their unworthiness, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. He would set those who had made good upon His right hand and those who had turned away from the light on His left. He would say to those whom He accepted in the Great Assize, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

Who is it, who dares to say all this? Run your eye along the files of time as far and as widely as you choose and find me a man on whose lips you can place these words without creating at once the impression either of downright insincerity or of shocking blasphemy!

Here was One who ventured to say to a small group of

His followers, 'Go into all the world. Teach the nations to observe the things which I have commanded you. Disciple and baptize them into the name of God and into my name and into the name of the Holy Spirit. And in that vast undertaking, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age.'

The men who heard Him say it took this command seriously. They saw in His face that measure of the glory of God and they heard in His words that accent of divine authority which sent them out to give their lives to the execution of that sublime command. Who is this person who takes it upon Himself thus to address the intelligence and conscience of the ages?

You will bear in mind that all these men were Hebrews. Over their cradles had been chanted that Jewish ascription of praise, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One!" They had been nurtured from their youth upon the idea that to ascribe divine honors to a human being was an offense and a horror. Their minds were saturated with the belief in monotheism. Yet in sober earnestness they calmly spread upon the pages of the New Testament the portrait of a personality superhuman. And when they read their commission and found there the name of Jesus Christ bracketed with the name of God the Father, they did not shrink. Who is this Being who thus takes and holds the center of the stage in the great work of moral redemption?

Here was Paul, the leading apostle of that new faith, adding his voice to the chorus of praise! He was no intellectual dunce, incapable of distinguishing between fact and fancy, between the heated, extravagant claims of some religious fanatic and the valid assertion of sober

truth. He had been sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the ablest and most honored of Jewish rabbis. He had drawn upon the fountains of Greek culture, for he read and spoke the language of that gifted people. He had been himself an uncompromising opponent of the claims put forward by the earlier adherents of the Christian faith—"I persecuted that way unto death," he cried in later remorse. He had at first regarded Jesus Christ as a monstrous impostor.

Yet this man, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a man capable of writing such a hymn on Christian love as that found in the thirteenth chapter of his letter to the Corinthians and such an exposition of the great hope of life after death as that recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the same letter—this man of surpassing spiritual insight comes to hold this same exalted view of Christ's person.

He believed that "Jesus Christ being in the form of God thought it not a prize to be grasped to be on an equality with God." He believed that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." He prayed that "Christ might dwell in the hearts of men by faith and that knowing the love of Christ they might be filled with all the fullness of God." He called upon them to look forward to the day when they must "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or bad." He affirmed that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." He saw shining out of the darkness "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." He spoke in his letter to the Romans of that supreme hour when in the fullness of time "Christ came who is over all, God blessed forever." And when he pronounced his benediction upon the faithful of his day and upon the faithful

of all the days to come, it was, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."

I could multiply these citations from the pages of the New Testament almost indefinitely. I have purposely confined them to the first three gospels and to the unquestioned letters of Paul. Had I chosen to quote from the fourth gospel, which modern scholars regard as containing more of the elements of a philosophical interpretation and less of literal and exact history than the Synoptic Gospels (a judgment with which I heartily agree) the picture of the personal bearing of this Jesus might have been made still more impressive.

However the material utilized by the author of the fourth gospel may have been retouched in his desire to move beyond the idea of a Hebrew Messiah to that of the eternal Word of God becoming flesh and dwelling among us full of grace and truth, the very presence of such a document in the early church is profoundly significant. It appeared at an early day—perhaps in the first or second decade of the second century. It was accepted by those men who had been fed upon the tradition furnished, as Luke states, by those "who from the beginning had been eye witnesses of all those things set forth in order which were most surely believed." This writing was regarded as having sufficient historic value to be given a place alongside of the three earlier narratives touching the character, the teaching and the person of Jesus Christ. It cannot be lightly dismissed by any careful student of Christian origins.

It may be that the author of this fourth gospel "has preserved the image of His Master but in a picture framed

in by his own meditations and reflections." Even so, the fact stands that no such attempt was ever made to place a superhuman appraisal upon any of the other great religious leaders of that age. And this brave attempt on behalf of Jesus met with ready acceptance at the hands of men nourished on the earlier tradition and standing many centuries nearer to the actual occurrences of word and act than do we.

How striking are these tributes paid to Christ in that early document! He is represented as saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I am the way, the truth and the life. . . . No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "I am the bread of life . . . he that eateth this bread shall live forever." "I am the light of the world." "I am the true vine; abide in me, for without me ye can do nothing." "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." "I am the resurrection and the life—he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

What awful egotism thus to exalt Himself as the center and source of salvation unless the higher view of His person does rest upon some valid foundation! By what other interpretation can we justify His constant references to Himself and the staggering demands made upon men to order their lives according to His method and to rely utterly upon Him for their eternal well being!

We rest our claim not so much upon any imposing array of so-called "proof texts" as upon a certain consistent bearing which (according to the whole trend of New Testament teaching) Jesus assumed toward His disciples and toward all mankind. Here was One with no sins to confess, no mistakes to regret, no self distrust to keep Him in the background, no shrinking from high com-

mand or exacting responsibility! Here was One not pointing away from Himself to some higher source of help but saying, "Come unto me," with a sublime confidence in the satisfying outcome of such action. Is not this the Christ, the Savior of the world, the only begotten Son of God!

In the second place, I rest my faith in the higher view of the person of Christ upon the history of the Christian church for nineteen centuries. There is nothing new about this lower view. Arians, Socinians and Unitarians have been offering it to the moral need of the world in fine literary form and with the utmost sincerity of purpose for the last sixteen hundred years. And what has been the verdict of the centuries? How has it worked in the great, hard task of human redemption?

The pragmatic test has, of necessity, its limitations. It must be applied always with wise discrimination. No one would be so foolish as to claim that the swift and wide success of any system of religious belief affords a sure validation of all the items of belief contained in that system. "The little systems have their day—they have their day and cease to be." But when the "day" is stretched out to cover sixteen centuries of human history, and when the operation of contending systems can be carefully scrutinized in all the lands of earth where Christian effort has found its way, then the outcome must give us pause.

How does it come, to take a single illustration, that the development of the necessary spiritual vigor for world-wide missionary effort has been practically the monopoly of those branches of the Christian church which hold to the higher view of Christ's person! How does it come that this all-inclusive, self-sacrificing, heroic, devoted moral

interest in men which stands ready to swelter on the Congo, and to shiver in Alaska and Labrador, to face the dirt, the disease and the vice of the most repulsive sections of the crowded Orient, to brave the attacks of the Boxer outbreak in China or the horrors of Turkish massacres in Armenia, has been the peculiar product of those same sections of the Christian church!

Here is an army of the choicest young men and women which our colleges can show, enlisting for a warfare where there is no discharge. They are going out to minister to people whose faces they have never seen, whose names they do not know, whose languages they cannot as yet speak but whose needs they have already made their own. They are going forth in warm, unselfish sympathy to share with the less fortunate (through the ministry of hospital, of school and of church planted there by Christian generosity) the best we have in our own Christian faith. And it is highly significant that they all come from those branches of the Christian church which place a superhuman estimate upon the person of Christ.

Let me call to the witness stand twelve men, modern apostles of our faith, to give their testimony! They come from the ends of the earth and from various branches of the Christian church. David Livingstone from Africa, Adoniram Judson from Burmah, William Carey from India, Archdeacon Stuck from Alaska, Cyrus Hamlin from Turkey, John H. DeForest from Japan, John G. Paton from the New Hebrides, James M. Thoburn from India, Father Damien and Hiram Bingham from Hawaii, Daniel Bliss from Syria, Timothy Richards from China!

Here they are, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics. They differed at many points, touching their views of

ritual, polity and creed statement, but they stand together an unbroken phalanx in their readiness to ascribe divine honor to Jesus Christ in whose name and spirit they went forth. They affirmed in no uncertain tones their adherence to this higher view of the person of Christ. Their record of spiritual achievement is known the wide world around.

Match them, if you can, from the ranks of those who bring in the lower estimate of the person of Christ! I will not ask that the adherents of this other view should bring forward twelve names from the history of missionary effort worthy to be set alongside of the names which are written here. Let them bring a single name, worthy to be added to this list, from among those who were content to believe that Jesus Christ was only the wisest and best of men!

Unless we are ready to part company with our belief that history has a certain unity, that it develops according to a certain plan and that in its longer reaches it is sure to issue in some worthy outcome, this record of achievement must have weight. Unless we are ready to deny the claim that the history of the world embodies a certain vast moral process, we shall find it difficult to believe that for sixty generations of believing and aspiring men these sublime spiritual victories have been the reward of an ill-founded delusion and that comparative failure has been the disappointing spiritual result of adherence to the truth. "By their fruits," where they are carefully gathered and accurately weighed through long periods of time and over wide areas of territory, men will judge the claims put forward in the name of religion, even as they judge the trees which grow on all the hillsides of earth.

Why is it that the lower view of Christ's person seems to have shown itself defective in the creation and maintenance of spiritual impulse? Why has history persisted in putting the crown of spiritual success upon the efforts of those who proclaim the higher view? "Men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs from thistles." Such a return would be a flat denial of the law of cause and effect. Through long periods of history and over wide areas men do not gather the highest spiritual results from the teaching of falsehood—this finer moral success follows upon steadfast adherence to the truth. It could not be otherwise in a world where the best achievement is held in store for those who work with "the God of things as they are." It could not be otherwise among the followers of Him who said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

The church to which I belong suffered, a hundred years ago or more, from a serious division. There were those who held to this lower view of Christ's person and to our sorrow they went out from us. They took with them extensive church property which they had helped to create and a large body of church members with whom the more conservative people of that day were sorry to part company. The oldest and in many respects the greatest of our American universities was founded by Congregationalists but it openly identified itself with those who championed the other view. The leaders in this unhappy separation were men of such ability and character that it was openly predicted by some of them that in twenty-five years all the Christians in this country would become Unitarians.

More than a century of honest effort has been put forth by these two wings of what was once a single communion.

What has been the result? The two branches of the Congregational church have identically the same polity; they had the same traditions of Christian devotion behind them; at the time of the separation they were approximately equal in numbers; they have worked side by side in the same country.

But for some reason we find that to-day the communicants in that branch of the Congregational church which has upheld the higher view of Christ's person outnumber those in the other branch in round numbers about ten to one. And the Congregational Church has been always a church of slow growth. If we should bring into that comparison other Protestant churches which have exalted Christ as Savior and Lord, the Presbyterian and the Lutheran, the Methodist and the Baptist, the Protestant Episcopal and the Disciples of Christ, the verdict of this more recent period of church history would be still more convincing. It would seem that somewhere in that affirmation as to the person of Christ which has its roots in the appraisal offered by the men who wrote the New Testament, there is a source of spiritual dynamic which no section of the Christian church can afford to ignore.

It is easily possible to make out quite a plausible case on paper and apart from the stern moral needs of the race, for the purely human view of Christ's person. But when we are confronted with the long, hard task of regenerating masses of men caught and held by the power of evil, the problem presents new aspects. The morally well-to-do with an assured spiritual inheritance from devout parents, sitting comfortably apart from the grosser sins of the world amid their pleasant surroundings, may find that this lower, easier view suffices them. But when they have the courage to go forth in the name of Christ to seek

and to save that which is undeniably lost, we find them reaching out hungrily after a belief which has in it more of spiritual dynamic.

In the third place, I believe in the higher view of Christ's person because I find it spiritually satisfying. When men become conscious of their guilt, conscious of their need of forgiveness, of renewal and of reënforcement, they find in some mysterious way that faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men meets their wants.

The religion we profess was not at its inception a mere human impulse. When men looked up, making their appeal for help, feeling after it, if haply they might find it, they were made aware that the effort had received sanction and reënforcement from above. When they would draw nigh to God, they found that He had already been drawing nigh unto them. He had done this supremely in the Person of His Son. In real and definite fashion He had been seeking after them if haply He might find them. God so loved the world that in His greatest redemptive effort on their behalf, He gave His only begotten Son to the end that believing on Him they too might have eternal life. This supreme historical manifestation which God had made of Himself represented his utmost endeavor on their behalf. And believing on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord they had life through His name. I am sure that you will all agree that this is a fairly accurate characterization of the prevailing type of Christian experience which has resulted from faith in Him as a divine Lord and Savior.

I turn back to the period of my own conversion. I felt the burden of guilt for evil done. I craved the divine

forgiveness. I felt the sense of alienation from God. I cried out for some divine power to renew my heart. By an act of living faith in Jesus Christ that burden was rolled away; that sense of separation from God was changed into a glad feeling of acceptance; and in that sense of relief and renewal I have been rejoicing from that day to this.

When I compare notes with my fellow men, I find that this experience is in no sense peculiar. It has been the common experience of penitent and believing men. When we accept and rely upon the fact that the divine and the human were blended in vital fashion in that one perfect life, it becomes the sure pledge of our own salvation. We can believe that forces divine and human may be blended in every believing and aspiring soul in such a way that we may find deliverance from the power of evil and walk in newness of life as the sons and daughters of the Most High.

In the light of this sublime truth of the Incarnation of the Son of God, we cease to think of the human and the divine as standing over against each other at a wide remove with a great gulf fixed between. We think of the divine and the human in New Testament terms. We liken them to the vine and the branch, the father and the child, the body and its many members. Man is made potentially in the image of God. He has the capacity to receive unto himself the fullest measure of divine help. When we believe this, because of what we have seen historically realized in Jesus Christ, there comes to us the sense of an almighty reënforcement in our effort to walk in His ways.

The deep and glad experience of moral renewal by His own divine grace makes clear the fact, as Bishop Gore has said, that "By His Incarnation He inaugurated a kingdom

of redemption in the heart of the old kingdom of nature. He abides in that new creation as the inner principle of its life. He bears along this new work to its final goal." When we enter into vital fellowship with Him by an act of faith, we know whom we have believed, we are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him, and we feel that our lives "are hid with Christ in God" to our own eternal advantage.

The mind of the church, through its various doctrinal controversies and the findings of its councils in those earlier centuries, took definite and formal shape touching this question of the person of Christ. His perfect humanity was not surrendered nor obscured—He is still the Son of Man, the heir and the embodiment of all that is essentially human. His divine nature was no less tenaciously retained—He was of one substance with the Father, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. And any section of the Christian church which has allowed the light of this great, brave article of faith to be dimmed in its presentation of the gospel, has suffered hurt and loss in its power of appeal.

How this mighty truth of the Incarnation searches out the profounder needs of the human heart and finds us on the deeper levels of our being! "So akin are God and man to one another that God can really exist under the conditions of manhood without ceasing to be God. And man can be taken to be the organ of Godhead without one whit ceasing to be man." "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For

of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever!"

It is inevitable that men should ask at this point,—"But have we here on the pages of the New Testament a correct report of the words and deeds and character of Jesus? Can we rely upon the substantial accuracy of the record?" It is a straight question which must be met upon the basis of honest, critical study.

In reply to that query I would say this—If these men did not see and hear what they have recorded, then they invented it. If they are not reliable witnesses of actual facts, then the Gospels were the product of their own creative fancy!

But how inadequate was their modest ability for such a task! They were, for the most part, peasants—fishermen, farmers and the like. It would have involved an achievement in creative imagination without parallel in all the history of literary effort. The foolish legends regarding the childhood of Jesus as contained in the Apocryphal Gospels show what the minds of men unrestrained by the sense of fidelity to fact are likely to produce when they give free rein to their fancy. What a distance in kind lies between these wild tales of the Apocrypha and the sober narratives of the Synoptic gospels!

How these gospel narratives impress the open mind by their straightforwardness! Take one single characteristic, —the fairness of these men to their opponents! As some one has fitly said, "How free from abuse are the gospels! How simply and how justly drawn are the characters of Pilate, Caiaphas, Herod, Judas! They are not abused, they are photographed. The sin of Judas and the sin of Peter are told with a like simplicity. These writings show

that fairness which is esteemed everywhere as the trait of a trustworthy witness!"

How impressive is that terse but significant preface at the beginning of the gospel according to St. Luke! Listen to it once more, familiar though the words may be! Note the care and precision observed in his statement!

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, delivered them unto us, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed." (R. V.)

Here was one who had special opportunity to gather "accurate" information! Here he was utilizing materials furnished him by "eye witnesses" of that which he was to record! Here he was taking pains to set forth in sober historical fashion an orderly account which might be received as altogether reliable! "What a fund of reassurance lies in those simple verses! How vividly they enable us to realize that behind the written gospel lay the authoritative apostolic message enshrined in the memories of the church."

It was one of the foremost preachers of New York City who said recently that after reading, during the last thirty years, many volumes of New Testament criticism he "had no hesitation in asserting his conviction that the gospels give us credible history; and that they, while not inerrant, present us a portrait of Jesus sufficiently accurate to do the work which God intends it shall do." He "found no solid reason for thinking that the reliable passages in the gospels

are few or that the portrait is the work of imagination inspired and colored by affection." The men who wrote the gospels were in his judgment "more trustworthy than any of the men who have endeavored to discredit them." His judgment coincides with that of a great army of thoughtful, discriminating men who, having weighed the evidence, believe that in the gospels we find a solid core of historic fact.

We are all aware of the serious intellectual problems involved in holding this belief embodied in the higher view of the person of Christ. How hard it is to understand how One subject to the laws of growth, tempted in all points like as we are, tasting the whole human situation for every man, could at the same time be the divine Son of God and the Savior of men!

But it ought to be remembered that all forms of life increase in mysteriousness as we ascend the scale of being. If the clam on the beach had the capacity for intelligent observation, reflection and discrimination, the higher life of a dog would seem to it a mystery inscrutable. It would see the dog possessed of a delicate sense of smell, a keen sense of hearing and the power of rapid motion, lying quite outside the poor clam's immediate experience and presenting problems altogether baffling. If in turn the dog were endowed with faculties for reflection and discrimination, my own life as a human being would seem to him an insoluble enigma. The dog would see me reading books, enjoying the conversation of my friends, inspired by lofty music, by great paintings, by noble architecture, by the glory of the starry heavens. From all these moods and modes of being the poor dog would feel himself excluded by the meager range of his own powers. If he were taken

into the Dresden Gallery or into Durham Cathedral he would not give the Sistine Madonna or the massive arches a second glance. He would find the movements of a rat a hundred fold more interesting than the conversation of Doctor Samuel Johnson. If he were taken to a concert where some world-renowned orchestra was rendering the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven, the music would not engage his interest for a moment—he would promptly either fall asleep or else set up a dismal howl of protest. My pleasure in all those fields would remain altogether beyond his ken. It is the law of life that all forms of existence increase in mysteriousness as we ascend the scale of being.

Who then by searching can find out God? Where is the mind which would make bold to define unto perfection the Almighty? Who are we that we should assume to surround, to penetrate, to analyze the Infinite Nature of Him who is above all? It would be passing strange if our unaided intelligence should prove equal to the task of comprehending fully "the mystery of godliness" when (in the language of an ancient liturgy) the Eternal,

> "Was manifest in the flesh,
> Justified in the Spirit,
> Seen of Angels;
> Preached unto the Nations,
> Believed on in the world,
> Received up into glory."

The language of earth can never express adequately the divine realities of a world unseen. We see through a glass darkly; we know in part; we speak of that which is confessedly too vast to be defined worthily in these human terms.

But in the face of so many unsolved mysteries in the

visible as well as the invisible world, I can more readily believe that, according to the representations made in the New Testament, God for our redemption made this supreme manifestation of Himself in the life of One who taught and wrought in Galilee as the Son of God in a sense altogether unique, than to believe that this one perfect life which the earth has ever seen was defaced by a recklessness of statement or by an arrogant assumption which would destroy at once our faith in His mental sanity and in his moral sincerity.

"We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus, the Lord." Here, in my judgment, is the main source of spiritual dynamic in our Christian faith! When a small rowboat strikes a sunken log, the obstruction may send the frail craft to the bottom of the sea. The *Titanic* would pass over the log with never a jar. But when the *Titanic* on her initial voyage clashes with an iceberg the proud ship is sent to its doom. If it were the movement of a planet, no earthly obstacle could withstand the resistless advance of that heavenly body. "The movement of the spiritual energy of Jesus Christ across the moral life of the race is like the movement of a planet." He is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes.

III

THE POWER OF ATONEMENT

WHEN they were come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him." How significant it is that for centuries thoughtful, aspiring men and women in all the lands of earth have gathered around that scene as if dimly conscious that somehow their eternal salvation was bound up with the forces and values there manifest! They stood there looking at Him and at each other, saying in quiet tones, "He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. By His stripes we are healed." It has been an impressive fulfillment of that great prophetic word attributed to Him. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth—this He said signifying what death He should die—will draw all men to me." He believed that His death would win from men a mighty response.

Yet straight in the face of the spiritual dynamic of the Cross we are compelled to admit that in recent decades this idea of atonement has been neglected and obscured. The main criticism upon the preaching of recent times has not been that men have been preaching mistaken views of the atonement—for the most part they have not been preaching any view. When we scan the sermon topics announced by some metropolitan daily in its church no-

tices for the following Sunday, we rarely find this theme. When we think back upon the sermons we have heard in the last twenty years, we find that our minds have not been directed many times to the fact that "Christ died for our sins." As the ground of forgiveness, as a basis for spiritual appeal, as a source of motive for right living, this truth has fallen in many quarters into disuse. This deep diapason stop on the cathedral organ has too rarely been drawn out and the music of worship has suffered loss.

This is a serious matter. "The Christian minister," as Robert F. Horton of London once said, "who from intellectual difficulties or from lack of spiritual experience, ignores the Atonement becomes either nerveless and ineffective, or eccentric and sensational. His message is gone. He either loses heart and becomes dull, or he strikes out and endeavors by his own ingenuity to supply the gap which is made. But from the nature of the case his ministry must cease to be fruitful."

When Lady Macbeth walked the floor at midnight, her eyes wide open but their sense shut, many of her faculties asleep but her moral nature painfully awake, she was suffering remorse from a deep-seated sense of guilt. She moved about uncertainly, washing her hands as if she would remove the red stain of sins committed. She cried out in her anguish, "Out, damned spot, out, I say! Will these hands never more be clean! They smell of blood still."

And her husband, sharing both in her distress and in her guilt, cried out to the physician:

> "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
> Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart?"

The wise doctor replied, "Therein the patient must minister to himself. More needs she the divine, than the physician."

The great dramatist drew his picture with a steady hand. He would have us know that to lift from any human soul a burden like that, something more is needed than a lovelier system of ethics or a more winsome example of fine behavior. The soul conscious of the stain and guilt of wrong doing cries out for redemption. It cannot be satisfied with anything less.

However we may view some of the theology of the Roman Catholic church, we may be sure that it has not been studying human psychology on the religious side through all these centuries without learning something about it. The Catholic church knows full well what will touch profoundly the minds and hearts of the plain people. The very structure where it carries on its work is commonly surmounted by the Cross. When we enter a Catholic church among the most prominent objects that meet our eyes are "the Stations of the Cross," the portrayal of the successive steps taken by Jesus on His way from the judgment hall of Pilate to Calvary. The main service in the Catholic ritual is the Mass, the visible enactment, according to their view, by the use of symbols, of the suffering and death of Christ. The doctrine of vicarious suffering has always a prominent place in the teaching of that church. The members of that communion say, as the author of the letter to the Hebrews said, "We have an altar." The Catholic house of worship is never mistaken for a lecture room or a concert hall. It holds constantly before the eyes of men the fact that Christ died for our sins. It steadily reminds men that God so loved the world

as to give His Son to live, to suffer and to die on our behalf.

And Protestants know full well that in producing those deeper moods of devotion which underlie all that is best in Christian life, no other office of the church can compare for one moment with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper rightly administered and worthily received. Hereby we do show forth the Lord's death. In that hour we hear Him say again, "This is my body which was broken for you. This is my blood which was shed for you." And in that mingling of penitence, gratitude and high resolve, we feed upon Him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Until human nature becomes something utterly different from anything that we have known thus far, until the sad, hard facts of moral failure have ceased to be in evidence, we cannot safely ignore the sublime truth which lies back of these words,—"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The lack in warmth and in power of appeal frequently charged up against the religious life of our day may be in large measure due to our neglect of this cardinal truth.

The decreased emphasis upon the death of Christ has been due to certain reactions, some of them altogether wholesome. There has come a reaction against that bald use of the term "blood" which was once common in many quarters. The more delicate refinement of feeling and of speech which marks the worship and religious utterance of our day has rendered the use of certain hymns which were once in vogue undesired and ineffectual. The once loved hymn by Cowper, "There is a fountain filled with blood," is a noble composition as compared with some of the sacred doggerel which found place in certain collections of so-

called "gospel hymns." Even so, one rarely hears Cowper's hymn announced in Christian worship. It is not because we are less Christian but rather because we are more Christian that a certain repulsive use of the term "blood" has come into disfavor.

There has come an intellectual reaction against some theories of the atonement as being irrational. They do not square either with the mind of Christ or with the facts of moral life. There was something manifestly unreal and artificial about the references to "imputed guilt" and "imputed righteousness." It smacked of mental and moral shuffling.

In some cases "rhetoric was called upon to do the duty of logic. Oriental metaphors such as 'lamb,' 'debt,' 'ransom' were used as if they had been scientific terms with their exact spiritual equivalents written over against them" in plain English. Glowing figures of speech from the far east having to do with the work of human redemption were set in operation without any real translation of them into our western modes of speech and thought. All this made for confusion; and there came the inevitable reaction.

The reaction from certain theories of atonement has also been moral. The presentation which involved a certain ethical dualism in the contrasting attitudes of the Father and the Son toward sinful men became abhorrent to the mind of the church. The well-worn story of the reconciliation of an angry father and a wayward, willful son, who had become estranged through his sins, accomplished at the death bed and by the agony of a dying wife and mother was never anything but a frightful travesty upon the character of our Father who is in Heaven.

Imagine the effect of asking any intelligent Christian

congregation to-day to sing that hymn of Isaac Watts' which begins,

> "Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood
> Which calmed God's frowning face,
> That sprinkled o'er the burning throne
> And turned the wrath to grace."

Our great-grandfathers sang that hymn and liked it but the conscience as well as the taste of a thoughtful congregation to-day would have none of it.

There has come a further reaction through the better knowledge of scripture. We have come to realize that the doctrine of blood atonement in its literal form was taken mainly from the book of Leviticus and from other sections of the priests' code. We do not find it in the teachings of Amos and Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, or in the teaching of Jesus. On the contrary we find in all of these teachers of God's truth a stout protest against the idea that the Lord will be pleased with thousands of rams brought as burnt offerings or that a man can give the fruit of his body in sacrifice for the sin of his soul.

We find also that of the two schools of religious opinion revealed in the Old Testament, the prophetic and the priestly, the prophetic which opposes the literal theory of blood atonement represents distinctly the higher level of thought, of feeling and of purpose. We have learned also to trace the influence of his earlier Rabbinical methods of thought and of expression upon the mind of Paul when he came to speak of the efficacy of Christ's death.

We were told by the author of the letter to the Hebrews that "By the law almost all things are purged with blood" and that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." But as a plain matter of fact, there was.

Even under the priestly law as outlined in the book of Leviticus, there was remission of sin without the shedding of blood. The man who had sinned was directed to bring a lamb or a goat for a sin offering. But if he were a poor man and his means did not suffice for a lamb, he was permitted to bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons to the Lord, one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering. "But if his means suffice not for two turtle doves or two young pigeons, then he shall bring his oblation for that wherein he hath sinned, the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour." So we find according to the strict terms of that Levitical law, there was remission of sin without the shedding of a drop of blood. The real ground of forgiveness even in that earlier day was not in the cutting of the throat of a lamb or the wringing of the neck of a pigeon as an act of penitence or atonement—the ground of forgiveness lay in the free, unpurchased and unpurchasable mercy of God.

How shall we relate the death of Christ to that abiding principle? How are we to think in modern terms of this whole idea of vicarious suffering? The theories of atonement come and go—they are broken lights which have their day and cease to be—but the great fact endures with a potency of appeal which nothing can destroy. We may be sure that any idea which thus stands the wear and tear of the ages has an abiding value in it which answers to human need. "There they crucified Him!" Only four words—yet how much pain and shame they suggest! The supreme tragedy of all time is there portrayed.

I shall not dwell at any length upon the theories of the atonement which have been largely discredited in the minds of multitudes of discriminating people in all the

churches. The satisfaction theory building upon the analogies of the civil law insisted that the justice of God was such that He could not suffer the violation of His divine laws without exacting the appropriate penalty. Sinful men found themselves by their disobedience condemned without remedy, but before sentence was executed Jesus Christ came forward and voluntarily suffered upon the Cross the penalty due to men for their sins. By the willing, generous sacrifice of Himself, He thus purchased their release.

The substitution or governmental theory of the atonement was built around the analogies of the criminal law. It represented the Father as ready to forgive penitent wrongdoers but he feared that the majesty of his administration might suffer loss were He to forgive guilty men simply upon condition of their sincere repentance. The restraining force of his divine government would be impaired by such repeated acts of executive clemency. Jesus therefore suffered upon the Cross to uphold the majesty of the divine government in the punishment of evil doing and to make forgiveness consistent with the maintenance of a righteous order in the divine administration. "The plan of salvation" whereby the innocent suffer the penalty due to the guilty, was, according to this theory, an administrative expedient.

But the forensic method in the former theory is not quite the atmosphere of the four gospels or of the best of the Epistles. We cannot read the New Testament and feel that the Cross is such a cold matter of commercial exchange. It seems altogether too mechanical. Moreover if the debt we owe has been paid, then we are free, whether or no. If we are free we are free, repentance and saving faith all aside. And if the debt has been fully paid in our stead,

it leaves scant room for any real forgiveness to be extended by divine mercy.

In dealing with that second theory, we must remember that the sufferings of Christ are nowhere in the scriptures described as penalty or punishment. And it would bring a serious blot upon the character of God to represent Him as resorting to such questionable expedients as those attributed to Him in the governmental theory, in order to uphold the dignity of His administration. We may readily believe that the ruler is not at liberty to indulge his own personal good nature as he will. The demand, at once moral and social, made upon him that evil should be punished is wholesome. And when he punishes, his action does not spring from any private feeling of vindictiveness —it arises from a certain "stately and austere conception of order."

Even so, the governmental expedient to which, we are told in this theory, God resorted, does not seem to meet the case. It would be a terrible charge to bring against any government to assert that it could be satisfied in its administration of justice by the punishment of the innocent rather than the guilty, even though the price were to be paid by some willing and innocent victim. This demand for the pound of flesh seems more like the conduct of an almighty Shylock than the action of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In my judgment this strange and forced interpretation placed upon the tragedy of Calvary has repelled more men than it has won to the service of God.

The whole history of this doctrine of atonement shows the necessity for keeping close to the facts of experience in the moral life of the race. When any claim made in the

name of religion is held apart from the test and validation of actual human experience, then that claim speedily becomes futile if not actually insincere. The ultimate appeal of all truth must be to experience.

It has been just as Gerald Birney Smith once said,—"Those theories which have passed into permanent form were built up by using concepts which were real to the age in which they were formulated. Anselm pictured the relation of man to God in terms of the feudal polity of his day. Grotius employed that ideal of the sanctity of governmental requirements which in the infancy of our modern democratic development was dear to the heart of every true man. Horace Bushnell in the days of our Civil War appealed to the self-forgetful devotion of the mother and the patriot, and found a quick response. Each theory employed the existing institutions and conceptions of the day to interpret the transforming influence of the Christian ideal of salvation." It may well be that the clear-cut conception of the inherent worth of human personality and the strong emphasis upon the fact of social solidarity characteristic of our day calls for yet another type of interpretation.

We have reached the point where we feel that even though we ourselves may have been fortunate enough to have escaped those vices and crimes which are listed with the grosser sins of the flesh, we all share in the guilt of a social order which occasions grief and pain, hurt and loss to millions of our less fortunate messmates at the board of life. The God we worship must also share in that grief and pain. We cannot think of Him merely as the benign, immanent "Power not ourselves who makes for righteousness" coolly portrayed by certain literary men and philosophers. The God we trust does not sit serenely apart in

the heavens viewing from afar the struggle and the defeats of his needy children. He too comes upon occasion "with dyed garments from Bosrah," red in apparel as one who has been treading the wine press. In a sinning and sorrowing world, God Himself must of necessity come with pierced hands and His head crowned with thorns. We are looking up at this hour into the face of a suffering God who bears His full share of the burden of evil in His world. In that thought we may indeed draw near to what I would regard as a more vital interpretation of the atonement.

Here are some positive principles which must enter into all our thought of this august truth! The love and mercy of the Father take the initiative in this work of recovery. "God so loved that He gave." He gave because He loved. He gave His Son. The God who thus provides the means of reconciliation does not Himself need to be reconciled or propitiated. The scriptures show us the divine Father who was ready for reconciliation and His sinful children who were not ready. To change our attitude, not to change His own, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

He was practicing what He preached by the lips of His Son. "If thy brother trespass against thee go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone. If he hear thee thou hast gained thy brother." The one who has suffered the wrong rather than the one who has done the wrong, would naturally take the initiative for the restoration of that relationship which was broken by wrongdoing. This abiding principle holds true in heaven as on earth. God who has suffered the wrong, takes the initiative in the work of reconciliation.

Here is no angry father or stern unyielding judge waiting to be appeased by the voluntary sufferings of His Son! Here is a Father moving toward those who have trespassed against Him in that supreme work of redemption which found its highest historic manifestation on Calvary. The barriers to be cleared away are in our hearts rather than in His. He comes across the breach in the person of His Son that those barriers may be removed.

We build our philosophy of the Atonement squarely upon the great forgiving love of God unpurchased by anybody, unhindered by any administrative exigencies, leaping the barriers which sin has interposed, to seek and to save that which is lost. Then the question comes, how are we to relate the death of Christ to that fundamental principle in the moral economy of the world?

Jesus came to manifest the Father. "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth." The greatest truth to which He bore witness was to be found in the fact that "He showed us the Father." He came to manifest the Father by His words and by His deeds of love, by the character He bore and by His supreme devotion to our interests which stopped at nothing, not even the painful, shameful death of the Cross. Having loved His own He loved them unto the end, cost what it might. Here on Calvary was love in its longest, hardest, divinest reach!

He suffered, not because of the demands of some legal fiction but because he had to suffer in the achievement of the end He sought. "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep," not in the payment of some penalty external to the situation where he finds himself. He suffers not to sustain the threatened dignity of some administrative régime. The good shepherd lays down his life

fighting the wolf, fighting the enemies of the sheep, fighting those forces of evil which menace the interests which he counts supreme. He does not die in the comforts of a well-tended bed of sickness. He dies engaged in heroic and bloody warfare against the forces of evil.

We may be sure that the death of Christ was not an item in some artificial plan of salvation calculated to make an impressive demonstration of forensic justice. It was not a pre-arranged event calculated to make a startling emotional appeal. Such an interpretation would render the whole scene on Calvary unreal and theatrical. The mother who sheds tears with the thought that she may by that moist gesture influence the heart of her wayward boy simply repels him. The necessity for the sufferings of Christ lay in the strength and the menace of the evil in the heart of the race which He came to save.

The Son of God suffered because God whom he came to reveal suffers in and for the sins of His people. The devoted father suffers in and for the wicked son who dishonors the name he bears by a life of crime. The affectionate wife suffers in and for the wrongdoing of an unfaithful husband—in that hard hour the measure of her love becomes the measure of her pain. The moral solidarity of the universe is such that we would not expect to find it otherwise when we rise to the source and summit of all being. God Himself is not exempt. "The Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world" declares that there is an eternal heartache and heartbreak on high because of the evil doing of the objects of that supreme affection.

This abiding moral interest of God in man was declared in its highest form, it was manifested in time by what Jesus Christ did on Calvary. And it is that which saves

men from their sins when they are brought within its power and made ready to act in coöperation with it for their moral recovery.

The work of Christ on our behalf was potent beyond all other because His love was the most sincere, His self-renunciation the most complete, His sympathetic participation in the world's pain and shame the most acute. In his desire for our redemption He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross—it was the completeness of His devotion to our interests and to the will of the Heavenly Father which brought Him to Calvary.

The efficacy of sacrificial love in the work of moral recovery is written in letters which burn on a thousand pages of human history. Here in an eastern college was a son who had been born of good parents, brought up in a home of Christian nurture. Upon him had been lavished all the benefits which love could suggest and affluence provide. He was surrounded with all of the privileges which come with college life at its best.

But, like Esau of old, he despised his birthright. He bartered away the best that life has for a young man for a miserable mess of pottage. He drank, he gambled, he stained his life with uncleanness. His course of dissipation was costly and to secure means for further indulgence he forged his father's name to a check and cashed it at a local bank. His fraud was detected; he was arrested and thrown into jail to await trial for a felony.

In his dire distress he telegraphed at once to his father. The father came from a western city on the swiftest train he could take. When he reached the college town he went straight to the jail. There behind the bars he clasped in his arms that son whose life was blackened with vice and

crime, the tears streaming down his face. The father had lived an upright, devoted Christian life and in that troubled hour his own goodness and affection became the measure of his pain. The father was wounded for the son's transgression and bruised for his iniquity. The Lord laid upon the father the iniquity of his child.

Was he suffering to pay the penalty of some outraged law of justice? Was he suffering in fulfillment of the demands of parental administration or to maintain the dignity of his own domestic government? Was he suffering with the thought that his pain might exert some potent moral influence upon that heart of disobedience which he was clasping to his own?

These fantastic theories never entered his mind for he was not versed in the theology of the Middle Ages. He suffered because he could not otherwise. He suffered because he loved. His sufferings became a modest part of that vicarious principle which runs all through life. And the look on that father's face as he stood there in the jail and the manifest distress in his honest heart were such that then and there the young man who had shown himself unresponsive to every other form of appeal made an about face and by the grace given to him entered upon a life of honor and usefulness.

Bishop Edwin H. Hughes was right in claiming that "It is through parenthood that the mysteries of Calvary are revealed and understood. In what earthly fathers and mothers suffer for wayward and lost children is a suggestion of the passion with which God in Christ has sought his sinful ones and suffered for them. It is in the joys, the tragedies, the sanctities of home life and family relationships that the joys, the tragedies, the sanctities of the universe are symbolized for devout and discerning souls.

Here also the divine and the human are richly blended. It is in the holiest relationships of human life that men come to know the humanity of God and to discover how deeply divinity is revealed in humanity and how men may become partakers of the divine nature."

The principle of vicarious suffering runs all through life and the necessity for its beneficent operation is everywhere. Here was an action reported to me by a physician! There was a family living far out in the country. The youngest child in that home was suffering from a sudden attack of malignant diphtheria. It was before the day of rural telephones or of automobiles and the sending of a message for the doctor and the time required for him to reach his patient was a matter of several hours. The child was rapidly growing worse, breathing with great difficulty. The intelligent mother feared that the little one would be choked to death before the doctor could come to relieve the distress by a slight operation which would give him time to remove the cause of that distress by wise treatment. She calmly put her own mouth to the child's mouth and sucked away the deadly phlegm until the little one could breathe without distress. She did it again and again until the physician arrived. His prompt and wise treatment relieved the child and restored her to health. But the mother's loving action carried the infection into her own organs. She contracted diphtheria and the following week she died. She had given her life in vicarious fashion for the life of the one she loved.

Yonder in the city of Louvain, in a home of affluence, a child was born who came of good stock! He was educated for a business career and the family anticipated for him a life of prosperity and pleasure. But when he was eighteen

years old he joined the Society of the Sacred Heart. On the completion of his training he went out as a missionary to the Hawaiian Islands.

Here he was deeply touched by the sad condition of the lepers who had been deported to the Island of Molokai. He felt the desire to minister to their need and he volunteered to take spiritual charge of the leper settlement. He knew that to live among those stricken people meant social ostracism and the end of all chance for preferment in his church. It might also mean a lingering death from a loathsome disease. No matter—his heart was set upon that heroic service!

He went to live among those unfortunate people for the rest of his days. He managed by the labor of his own hands and by skillful appeals to the Hawaiian government of that day to secure better dwellings, and better food and a better water supply for the wretched people. He organized games and sports that he might bring some ray of cheer to their desolate hearts. He preached to them the gospel of the Son of God and he lived it among them in terms of faithful, unselfish action.

His name was Father Damien and he brought fresh honor upon the high calling of the Christian ministry. He too contracted the dread disease of leprosy and thirty-five years ago he died at his post. "He gave himself," not in one hour of heroic self-abandon but through all those long, hard, sad years of faithful ministry, that the poor lepers might live as they could not have lived but for his redemptive effort. He had caught the spirit of his Lord. He entered into the fellowship of His sufferings as also into the power of His resurrection.

Here also on a widely different field was the same principle of vicarious suffering manifested in terms of politi-

cal action! In one of the great cities of the Middle West it was alleged that a certain man had been elected to the United States Senate by the illegal use of a campaign fund. The aspirant for senatorial honors was unseated later upon that very charge. It was alleged that his political henchmen had gone to various powerful corporations and wealthy individuals soliciting contributions to this corruption fund. The fact that they had done so had been communicated in confidence to the proprietor of one of the leading newspapers in that city by a man of high character and generous means. The charge was publicly made, without giving any names, in the columns of that paper. Then the political managers declared that the newspaper had lied and defied the editor to supply proof.

Then this man who had furnished the information felt that he could not leave the editor of the paper under an unjust imputation. He at once came out into the open and gave names and places and the date when he had been asked to give money to that fund. His character and standing in the community were such that his declaration established the truth of the claim which had been made and silenced the corrupt politicians.

But with devilish ingenuity they sought to punish him for his action. He was for weeks shadowed by private detectives. This came to naught for there was nothing in his life which would not bear the light of day. Finally his enemies induced a paid liar to make the charge that this man of honor had sustained immoral relations with his wife. He made his wicked statement publicly and actually brought suit for the alienation of his wife's affections.

Then this upright citizen had to fight them in the courts. He suffered the humiliation which any high minded man would suffer in having his name dragged about by a sensa-

tional press and his past life scrutinized by corrupt lawyers intent upon fastening upon him something unworthy. It cost him thousands of dollars and many weeks of disagreeable effort. He won out at every point and the whole ugly accusation fell to the ground. He had entered upon that painful experience through his sense of civic obligation and of chivalrous feeling for his friend. It cost him dear but he stood ready to pay the price. He was wounded for the transgressions of others and bruised for their iniquities but it all helped to clear the air and to pave the way for better methods in political life.

Here was this redemptive principle at work on all these varied fields of interest! It is just as true to-day as it was in the time of Christ that unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies the harvest is impossible. "The doctrine of the atonement," as the President of Bowdoin College once said, "is self-evident to every man who has ever fought entrenched and powerful evil or sought to recover the wicked from their wickedness. Nothing short of this experience of unflinching sacrifice for the triumph of God's will and the good of man can interpret to-day the meaning of the sacrifice of Christ. Every man who has tried to do these things in any degree knows full well that there can be no salvation, either from sin or from the misery which sin entails on guilty and innocent alike, save by the vicarious sacrifice of some brave, generous servant of righteousness."

When we reach the summit of all being we would not expect to find it otherwise in Him from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. He is the living God, the One in whom we live and move and are. He lives a real life. He loves men and fights the evil of the

world and suffers in consequence as only He can suffer. His love becomes the measure of His pain. When I stand at the foot of the Cross and look up into that face where for nineteen hundred years men have seen the glory of the Eternal, I see just that. When I hear falling from those august lips words which the world will never forget, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," I feel myself in the presence of a power which is able to save to the uttermost all those that put their trust in Him. "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

We are told, sometimes with quite a flourish, that in the classical passage upon sin and its forgiveness, the parable of the Prodigal Son, there is not the slightest mention of vicarious suffering. I wonder! When the Prodigal Son came back from the far country, ragged, dirty, footsore, with an ugly look of vicious indulgence written across his face in a bold hand, his father saw him. He saw him coming "while he was yet a great way off." How did he come to see him so soon? He had been looking for him during all those weary years. He had been going down to the foot of the lane to look up and down the road in this direction and in that—they were farmers you know, for there was a "fatted calf" at hand to be killed and the elder brother was at work "in the field." The father stood there looking down the road, longing for the return of the boy who had broken his heart by doing wrong.

What do you call that element, that disposition, that moral interest in the heart of the Eternal Father which goes down to the foot of the lane and looks and suffers and longs for the return of his children who have been doing wrong? Take that attitude and carry it out into

terms of action! Follow out the full implications of it, and you will scarcely find a stopping place until you face that mercy which leaves the ninety and nine and goes out upon the mountains suffering vicariously in the recovery of that which is lost.

One reason why so much attention was given to the death of Christ in the New Testament is to be found in the necessity those men felt for removing the reproach and scandal which in that day seemed to attach to a crucified Messiah. The Cross was indeed to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. The Cross in that day represented exactly what the gallows means to us—it was the method used for the execution of the vilest criminals. When the disciples began to proclaim Jesus as the promised Messiah who had fulfilled all the highest expectations found in that Messianic hope, the inevitable rejoinder would come, "But was not your vaunted Messiah hung by the Roman government?"

More than that, it was to many minds a mystery how such an event could have occurred in a world governed, as they believed, by moral purpose and for spiritual ends. How could God allow such a life as His to be thus maltreated? How could He permit His chosen One to be nailed to the Cross between two thieves in the eyes of a jeering mob? The early apostles gave themselves to the hard task of explaining the death of Christ and of relating it in some vital manner to the work of human redemption.

It has to be borne in mind steadily that Jesus did not commit suicide nor was He slain by what men sometimes call "the act of God." The immediate causes of His death are to be found in the jealousy of the priestly party in the

Jewish church, in the treachery and greed of Judas, in the careless unwillingness of Pilate to concern himself with the fate of an idealist, whose methods seemed to that hard Roman official altogether fantastic, and in the popular clamor of an unthinking mob stirred to action by a false appeal to their prejudices.

But the profounder cause of the death of Christ lay in His willingness to come into a world where all these forces of evil were apparent in order to bear His testimony to the truth, to live a life which would rebuke the unworthy and manifest the Father with a completeness and finality which left nothing to be desired. Any one undertaking to do this must suffer for his courage. Jesus recognized that fact early in His ministry. "He began to show to His disciples" at Cesarea Philippi how "He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders, chief priests and scribes and be killed." And by His own choice and self-dedication He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

The true meaning of His action from Bethlehem to Calvary is summed up in those familiar words, "Herein was the love of God manifested toward us in that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us."

"It were no gospel," as Bishop Gore once said, "that the best of men after a life of boundless self-sacrifice should have been harried to death on Calvary. It only becomes a gospel by the fact that He who submits to this ignominious death truly reveals the love not of man only but of God. It only becomes a gospel if He really was the Son of God who out of a love which was His own and His Father's, had come to give Himself in sacrifice for man."

"The law of cost" operates all through life. The things which have value must be paid for, now in one form of equivalent, now in another. And the high privilege of cherishing a warm and pure affection is about the costliest thing we know anything about. Love lets the one who cherishes it in for increased expenditure and more exacting obligations. In the very nature of the case the high task of moral recovery through a divine redemption could not be an exception. Our eternal salvation is "bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without spot or blemish."

"The blood is the life," according to the scripture—it is the life offered, given, poured out in willing sacrifice and service. It represents the moral power of the life that gives it at its best. The blood of the soldier purchases the freedom or the security of his country. The blood of the martyr becomes the seed from which springs the stronger and holier church. The blood of the friend who dies that another may live becomes redemptive. In every case the highest moral energy of the soldier, the martyr, the friend, is put forth for the gaining of the high end in view. In like manner "the blood of Christ" represents the highest moral energy of His matchless life freely given on our behalf and by that energy men are saved. And this is what thoughtful men have in mind when they say, "We are saved by the blood of Christ."

What other aspect of moral life can bear comparison with this readiness to suffer vicariously in the potency of its appeal? It is beautiful and gracious, as R. W. Dale argued, to dismiss our resentment toward those who have wronged us. It is still more beautiful and gracious freely to suffer on their behalf. "Who then shall dare to deny God this highest form of goodness which is possible to

man? If by suffering for us the Son of God in whom and through whom the human race is related to the eternal Father, can enable the divine mercy to liberate men from the awful sense of guilt, from the loss and penalty incurred by sin, who shall volunteer to tell him that divine justice forbids the sacrifice, or that human need cannot accept the redemption which the sacrifice achieves."

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Responsibility where it is held as a sacred trust means unrest, painful effort, sacrificial devotion to the interests entrusted to power and authority. And what shall we say of Him who is "crowned with many crowns," the One who is king of kings and lord of lords, before whom at last every knee shall bow and every tongue confess? Here also responsibility carries with it the obligation of sacrificial effort. And the measure of that responsibility and of the infinite concern for human well-being becomes the measure of the sacrifice. We may well believe that on such a head among the "many crowns" will be found a crown of thorns, symbolic of the pain there felt because of the evil in the lives of men.

We have been assured by One "whose personal character guarantees his veracity and forestalls our doubts as to his knowledge, that the way is open for any man to return to the Father." It is not necessary to insist, on the basis of the supposed implication of certain texts, that it is impossible for God to pardon men on the sole condition of their repentance or that the way has not always been open as it was for the returning Prodigal. "But so long as men *feel* that there are difficulties in the way of their salvation, which no effort on their part can remove, it makes no material difference whether these difficulties are real or imaginary, objective or subjective, they need to be taken

out of the way. The mental condition itself must have an atonement."

"And it is precisely this effect which the death of Jesus taken in connection with His whole career produces. Even if it did not serve to remove any obstacle to human welfare which stood in the way of God Himself—a point on which men may differ—it did destroy the impediment to religious action and added new vigor to the spiritual endeavors of sinful men."

The Cross of Christ shows the ugliness and the deadliness of moral evil. If a man can ever be brought to hate evil he will hate it at the foot of the Cross. How can man go on sinning and wounding the One who bears His blows as Jesus did?

The Cross shows to what lengths sacrificial love will go. If a man ever feels the awful beauty of such love, he will feel it at the foot of the Cross. Out of that mingled hatred of evil and grateful appreciation of holy love come those new impulses which bring men to God in penitence and consecration. On the basis of that invincible moral interest in man which was manifested on Calvary, men can be summoned to cherish the hope of complete moral recovery. Is not this the gospel of the Son of God?

It is a work in which we too are called to share. The Author and Finisher of our faith endured the Cross and despised the shame. He laid upon us a like obligation—"If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross." His sufferings were at once unique and representative. He would have all those who put their trust in Him take part in this redemptive action. "Can ye drink the cup that I drink?" We can! We must! If the cup should pass from any one of us, his share in that re-

demptive ministry, which is to wash the world clean in the blood of sacrificial devotion, would be lost to him and to the race.

It was in line with this expectation that the greatest of the apostles bravely said, "I am crucified with Christ." I bear in my body the marks"—*"stigmata"* was the term he used—"of the Lord Jesus." "I die daily." "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ."

He viewed the work of vicarious suffering as uncompleted. He saw that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" and He believed that God had "committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation." He would have every devout man enter sympathetically into that age-long, world-wide task of redemption. He felt that so long as the death of Christ and the resurrection of Christ remain only external events, they do not accomplish our salvation. They became morally efficacious only as they are reproduced by faith in the conscious experience of every Christian. If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. If we die with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we share in His pain and humiliation, we shall thereby be fitted to share also in His eternal glory.

We that are strong are in duty bound to bear the infirmities of the weak rather than please and profit ourselves. The debt of privilege is assessed upon every form of strength and the measure of the debt is proportioned to the degree of strength. There is no exception to this rule, not even for the Most High. The Greatest of all must be the Servant of all or He would not be the Greatest. The strongest must be the first among burden bearers, not in response to some legal obligation but as a necessary element in his moral goodness. Therefore when we face the

Son of God we are prepared to find Him "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." We expect to find Him bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows, because, in accordance with the principle named above, the Lord has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.

The great moments in life are not the moments of secure ease and serene enjoyment—they are the moments filled to the brim with the spirit of moral venture and with the joy of victorious struggle against evil. It was this fact which enabled Jesus to say even at that hour when the Cross was already casting its ominous shadow across his path, "My joy I leave with you that your joy may be full."

Here then at the heart of the gospel we find the Lord God of Heaven acting heroically and sacrificially on our behalf! Here is divine compassion which will not be turned aside nor beaten back nor chilled in its ardor by nails driven through the hands nor by the crown of thorns pressed down upon the brow nor by the spear thrust in the side! Here is "love that will not let us go."

When we view this great truth of atonement, not in the twilight of legal fictions or of administrative expedients but in that light which streams ever from "the green hill far away, outside the city's wall," we lift up our hearts and thank God and take courage. We sing those great hymns of the faith, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," "Rock of Ages" and "O Sacred Head Now Wounded," conscious that they express feelings in our own hearts which are not artificial but real. We know full well that they point to everlasting verities in the great moral order which enfolds us. We know of a truth that for us men and for our salvation, He came down from Heaven that He might bring us to the Father.

IV

THE VALUE OF PRAYER

WHEN General Grant was slowly dying from cancer at Mt. McGregor, an old friend and comrade in arms visited him. It was General Howard, whose empty coat sleeve (for he had lost his right arm at the Battle of Fair Oaks) bore silent witness to the quality of his patriotism. He sat there at the sick man's bedside speaking of the distinguished service which Grant had rendered to his country. He dwelt on the fact that because of his part in preserving the Union and in bringing to an end that era of civil strife, the patient sufferer would always be held in honor and affection by his fellow countrymen. But Grant waved all this aside—his mind was upon things higher than military achievement. He knew that his old comrade's piety was as genuine as his valor. "Howard," he said, "tell me something more about prayer."

It is a subject on which we all crave light. What happens when we pray? Does anything happen, beyond a certain reflex influence upon the heart of the man who does the praying? Is it a performance entirely subjective? When I pray am I merely lifting on my own spiritual bootstraps in a futile effort to change my level? Good exercise, perhaps, but achieving nothing! When I cry aloud for help, do I ever hear anything except the echo of

my own voice? When I stretch out a hand of appeal, is it ever taken up by an answering handclasp from on High? When all the faithful people on earth pray, does anything happen which would not have happened just the same if they had not prayed? These are plain, straight questions and they deserve plain, straight answers, if it lies within the power of the human mind to make adequate reply.

The place of prayer in the esteem and practice of multitudes of thoughtful, aspiring men in all lands and in all ages has been such that we may readily agree with the alternative appraisal recently placed upon it by an English writer: "Prayer is either the greatest faculty that man has, or it is the greatest delusion by which he has ever been misled. It is either the leap of the soul into its joyous birthright, or it is an act of stupidity and superstition unworthy to engage the interest of any serious man for an hour." The saints of earth would vote for the former view with both hands up. The meager, disappointing experience of many practical people who have tried to pray would incline them to the other estimate. In this lecture I wish to ask some direct questions as to the value of prayer.

"When I was a child, I thought as a child." I thought about prayer as a kind of magical performance whereby if a man were really in earnest and were sufficiently sure of himself, if he was careful to use the right words and to close his prayer with some such talismanic phrase as "for Jesus' sake" he could get pretty much anything he wanted. It was the action of a skillful beggar and differed only from ordinary begging, where poor people ask alms from the rich, in regard to the one addressed.

This careless identification of prayer with begging has led thousands of people to think of it as asking for some-

thing without giving anything. It was indeed "getting something for nothing" in open defiance of the law of cost so strictly enforced in all other fields of human effort. Dr. Mellone of the University of Manchester has well said, "One of the great laws of the inner life is that in order to receive we must give—nothing for nothing, little for little, much for much, all for all. Goodness cannot be had for the asking any more than knowledge can. Prayer is at once thought, feeling and endeavor." "Freely ye have received, freely give." We can only receive freely when we are giving freely.

"When I became a man, I put away childish things." I learned to think about prayer as communion, fellowship, coöperation between these finite spirits of ours and the Infinite Spirit of Him who is the source and summit of all being. When I pray I am working out my own salvation in more effective coöperation with Him who is working in us to accomplish His good pleasure. When I truly pray I can work better and I make it possible also for Him to work within me and through me to better advantage. In prayer man mobilizes all the best energies of his own inner life. They take the field under the command of and in open alliance with those dynamic spiritual forces suggested by Jesus when He said, "I can now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels." At any moment the man of prayer can say, "The Lord of Hosts is with us."

There are three main reasons why I believe in the value of prayer. First, I believe in prayer because I believe in God. In the first of these lectures I indicated the grounds upon which I rest my confidence that behind and within all these phenomena there is Power, Intelligence, Purpose,

Character, which I can best designate by saying, God. If He is God, He can hear. We can hear. "He that formed the eye shall He not see; He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?"

If He is God, He can make reply. Any one of you could stand up in his place now, if he chose, and answer back to my line of argument in approval or disapproval. The One whom we call God is no less able to make answer.

If He is God He will want to reply. If I were in dire distress at this moment, there is no one within the sound of my voice who would not instantly respond to my cry for help, if it lay within his power to bring relief. This God of character to whom we look up can be trusted to show at least an equal measure of moral responsiveness. He will vindicate His title as "the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Now prayer in the last analysis is the act of a child talking over his interests with and opening up his life to a Father who can hear and reply. The child is seeking thereby more completely and effectively to collaborate with Him for the high ends which He has in view for all of His children who concur in His purpose.

We are not seeking to instruct Him touching our necessities. It was One whose competence in prayer gave him the right to speak first who said, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Love of the right sort is not blind—on the contrary, its insight touching the vital interests of the object of its affection is the keenest and quickest. His infinite love is fully alive to the situation, recognizing at once those things which belong to our permanent well-being. When we pray we are seeking to avail ourselves of the benefits of that perfect intelligence. Every request we make is underlaid

by the attitude which says, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." The highest sort of answer to the request is oftentimes the sense of having our wills brought into agreement with what we believe to be the divine will.

We are not seeking to persuade His unwillingness. We go to Him knowing that He is more ready to give than we are to receive. The obstacles to the complete ministry of His abundance to our lack lie not in any divine reluctance to make response but in certain attitudes of mind and heart which we show. The spiritual inertia or the social selfishness in many a life becomes the dam holding back the stream of God's gracious help which otherwise might flow into that life, causing it to bring forth abundantly all the fruits of the spirit.

You might almost say that those great words standing in the forefront of the perfect prayer, "Thy will be done," contain all that is best and most essential in prayer. "In His will is our peace," and in His will is all that humanity needs. When we by an act of obedient trust thus place ourselves without reserve on the side of His divine purpose for us and for all mankind, we have the answer of peace and strength in our own hearts.

We may be sure that here as everywhere the method of the divine action in answering prayer is mediate rather than immediate. He helps men to help themselves and to help others. It is this principle which renders prayer the highest of all spiritual disciplines. The wise physician does not undertake with endless good nature to hand out health to his patients at a dollar a bottle, leaving them to order their physical habits as they may. He undertakes rather to aid and quicken those impulses toward recovery which are resident in the organism itself and to enlist the

intelligent coöperation of the patient at all points to achieve the desired end. The wise teacher does not pour information or technical knowledge without limit into every offered mind—he seeks rather to stimulate and direct the efforts of that mind to gain knowledge by its own wisely ordered initiative. The affectionate father according to the measure of his intelligence does not try to do everything for his children. He is most of all intent upon aiding those children to do for themselves what can never be done in a satisfactory way on their behalf.

We may be sure that the Father, from whom the whole family in Heaven and on earth is named, is no less competent in his method. When we pray in the fullness of faith for those benefits which are consonant with His holy will, He still acts in and through these faculties of ours for the worthy achievement which He has in mind. When we pray aright we are summoning all our resources into action for a more complete coöperation with His own reënforcing energy that as "laborers together with God" we may see our hopes translated into precious realities.

The sensible man does not ask God to do for him what he may well do for himself. At the close of this lecture if I were to sit down here in this pulpit and ask God to take me back to my hotel, no amount of earnest and powerful entreaty on my part would avail. You would find me sitting here to-morrow morning at sunrise. The Lord has given me a good pair of legs which will take me to my hotel and He expects me to use them. He works in and through all these faculties of ours, spiritual, mental and physical, and does not undertake by a succession of miraculous interventions to relieve us from the wise and conscientious use of them.

There was sound philosophy, as well as grim humor,

in the statement of the colored brother,—"If on Saturday night I say, 'Oh Lord send me a chicken for my Sunday dinner,' I just don't get anywhere. But if I say, 'Oh Lord, send me after a chicken for my Sunday dinner,' that there fowl is in my pantry in less than an hour." I am not approving his ethics but his philosophy of prayer was entirely sound.

There are prayers offered by the misguided which lie quite beyond the limits both of reverence and of sanity. If I were to pray ever so earnestly that an eclipse of the moon might occur on some other night than the one foretold by the astronomers as the result of their calculations, in order to meet my plans touching the garden party which I had arranged for my daughter that evening, I would seem to all sensible men lacking both in grace and in sense. The object of prayer must lie within the field where we have reason to expect results from the coöperation of these human wills of ours with the will of the Father. We look for results mainly along those lines where He works in and through these faculties of ours which are offered in willing consecration by the act of prayer.

I believe in prayer then because I believe in God. "For what were men better than sheep and goats, if knowing God they lift not hands of prayer, both for themselves and for those who call them friend."

In the second place, I believe in prayer because I believe in the testimony of the best people I have ever known or known about. "Men ought always to pray," the Master said. The best men always have prayed. Some of them have prayed regularly, steadily, intelligently through long years of wisely ordered devotion. Some of them have prayed fitfully in times of distress or emergency and it

may be that their prayers were offered ignorantly and crudely. But the fact stands that they prayed. "The race," as some one has said, "has shown itself incurably religious." And taking them by and large, making full allowance for the exceptional swallows here and there which do not make a summer, the best people would not have gained that best estate without this form of spiritual exercise.

What report do these best people bring touching the results of all this prayerful effort? We all know. Hearts renewed; wills strengthened; new sources of motive and stimulus to right action opened up; a fresh accession of zest and relish for the hard task of living in trying situations; added energy for carrying on, let come what may! These are the crops which prayerful men harvest season after season from that field of effort.

Nor has it all been confined to the inner life of the individual standing apart from the network of social relations. The very atmosphere of many a home has been transformed by the habit of prayer in that family. Entire communities have been lifted to higher levels of thought, feeling and purpose by the establishment and maintenance of places and habits of prayer which touched directly upon the associated life. Whole nations have been brought under the tuition and leadership of worthier ideals, methods, and policies, as the people of the nation became in great numbers prayerfully intent upon the consecration of the national life. I wonder if in all the history of the race there has ever been a time when so many thoughtful people, discarding the magic of prayer, still believed that it has power to change the hearts of men by its moral force, to sweeten the whole round world by its fragrance, and to bind it with gold chains to the throne of God.

In weighing this testimony I do not rely upon certain strange coincidences or striking occurrences, or upon the supposed interventions of a divine Providence sometimes triumphantly put forward as convincing "answers to prayer." This erratic and sentimental presentation of the matter has been largely discredited. It has often brought reproach rather than honor upon the very habit of prayer. It has been greatly overworked in certain quarters where people chose to live by their happy intuitions rather than by the carefully coördinated results of trustworthy experience.

I turn rather to those broad areas of experience where answers to prayer have been coming regularly and steadily in a truly dependable manner. I am perfectly willing to match up the experiences of the prayerful with those of the prayerless where other things, so far as we can judge, were equal, in the response which a great enfolding order, physical, mental, spiritual, has made to their efforts. I am confident that the overwhelming verdict would be to the effect that when men ask they receive, when they seek they find. When they knock, doors are opened to them into the treasure house of a world unseen.

Here are the names of three men, which have become household words on this side of the water and on that, Lincoln, Gladstone, Foch! They were not clergymen but laymen. One of them was an American, one an Englishman and the other is a Frenchman. One of them is a Roman Catholic, another was a Protestant and the third was not a member of any church. They were all men of prayer.

In the dark days of the Civil War Lincoln would say, "I have been driven again and again to my knees because I did not know where else to go." "Fondly do we hope,

fervently do we pray that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away."

When Gladstone was Prime Minister of the British Empire his habits of prayer were well known to John Morley, his biographer, and to all those who enjoyed his intimate friendship. Now and then he would for a day disappear altogether from the eyes of all who knew him—he was seeking for that help which comes from taking the sacrament, from the devotional reading of the Bible and from the exercise of prayer.

During the Great War when Marshal Foch was in supreme command of the forces of the Allies, it was remarked that now and then in the midst of a day of stress he would be missed for an hour from General Headquarters. Those who sought him would find him in some wayside chapel on his knees in prayer asking for the blessing and guidance of the God in whom he put his trust.

I name these three men because the whole world knows them and knows that they were too sane and true to use one hour of valued time in doing that which they believed to be useless. I could summon to their side a multitude that no man could number of all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues who would bear the same testimony to the help that has been found in prayer.

In the face of what has been achieved where men have prayed with sincerity, does any one doubt but that if all the people of honest purpose in the world should for a single generation unite in prayer for the spreading of the spirit of peace and brotherhood, for the union of all civilized peoples in a common endeavor for universal well-being, for the quickening of our desire for the elevation of the unfortunate, for the enthronement of right principle in the political order—does any one doubt but that as a

result of that united prayer, we would see the kingdom of God coming in all the lands of earth with power and great glory!

How the reflex of honest prayer makes for social justice! I cannot pray for any man with sincerity and at the same time withhold from him any social, economic or political right which justly belongs to him for the gaining of his own best estate. Prayer becomes therefore at once the most searching and the most potent form of spiritual discipline known to human experience. "In our prayers," as George Meredith said, "we dedicate the whole world to God." Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven! Here the unseen spiritual order to which our minds are turned, furnishes us at once the pattern for which we strive in our earthborn life and suggests the ultimate source of help in winning out over the obstacles encountered.

But how shall we pray in time of war when men of equal intelligence, men equally devout, are arrayed against each other in deadly hostility? How can God hear and make any sort of reply to the prayerful appeals of these contending hosts? It was our own Lincoln who said, in speaking of the North and the South during the Civil War: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes."

The question was brought home to millions of conscientious people in the Great War. It bore heavily upon every conscience which was morally sensitive. But, as an Englishman, who combines piety with discriminating intelligence, said while the Great War was on, "We can pray that we and our foes shall work out together a greater good than

any immediate victory of one side over the other, and that nothing of good which is hidden in our ideals or in theirs shall be lost."

Here is a prayer which any nation at any stage of its struggle for self-realization could honestly take upon its lips: "O Thou who hast been our dwelling place in all ages, before whose face the generations rise and pass, manifest thyself afresh in all our lives. Our fathers walked by thy guidance—still to their children be thou a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. O Thou great source of light, of peace and of righteousness, take the evil from our hearts and join us in one communion with all those who trust in thee and find that of thy faithfulness there is no end. Beat all our swords into ploughshares! Change all the tools and the moods of destruction into agencies of help! In the reign of justice and good will may we not learn war any more, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

How our own American people, for example, learned in the great disaster, through which we have passed, to sing with a breadth of vision and a depth of understanding far in advance of anything attained in our Civil War, those noble lines from the *Battle Hymn of the Republic!*

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath
are stored,
He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword,
His truth is marching on."

What a time for that sort of prayer which does not narrow its scope to the averting of some bit of personal discomfort or to the gaining of some immediate, private advantage! The great world order where we stand and

must ever stand together has in it a capacity for such a response as men have never known. What may we not expect when once its high privileges are approached and utilized by that finer type of intelligence and character which results from the closer and more effective coöperation of the human with the divine!

I am sure that this is what the greatest of the apostles had in mind when he wrote his letter to Rome, the center of an all-embracing political system in his day,—"The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now. The earnest expectation of the Creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The whole Creation was waiting for that higher type of character to take control and manifest in its fullness the glory which should be revealed in it.

In the third place I believe in prayer because Jesus Christ believed in prayer. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that He was not the Son of God in a sense altogether unique! Suppose for the moment that He was only the wisest and best of men! How significant it is that this wisest and best of men was preëminently a man of prayer! Humanity at its best prays! Jesus had more to say about prayer than any other whose words are recorded in our Bible. He was too sane and true to maintain in His own life or to enjoin upon others a habit which was foolish and useless. He saw life steadily and with clear eyes; and He saw it whole.

His habits of prayer were so well known and so manifestly efficacious that on one occasion when he ceased from His devotions, His disciples crept close to Him and whispered, "Lord, teach us to pray." They were presently to be sent forth to preach, to teach and to heal. They did not

ask for instruction in these necessary functions of their future ministry—they asked for that which was fundamental to all the rest,—"Lord, teach us to pray." Jesus did not argue about prayer. He did not stand first on one foot and then on the other, saying, "I hope that it may do some good." He prayed and the benefits of such action were so manifest that His disciples wanted to learn how to do it.

He taught them one prayer so beautiful, so comprehensive, so satisfying, that when the Parliament of Religions was held in connection with the World's Fair at Chicago thirty years ago this summer, the representatives of all the faiths of earth, as they met there day after day to discuss the great fundamental interests of religion, agreed with one accord to use at the opening of each session what we call "The Lord's Prayer." Protestants, Catholics and Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and Moslems, Shintoists and Confucianists alike, found its expressions acceptable; and they united their hearts and voices in this common approach to the God and Father of us all.

This prayer, which He taught to His disciples and to all the ages since, has in it from start to finish the accents of His own experience. "Our Father who art in heaven!" His own life was lived with a sense of unbroken fellowship with the Father who is in heaven—"I am not alone," he said; "the Father is with me." "Hallowed be thy name." His own life honored and "hallowed" those principles, ideals and values which belong to the name and the nature of God. His unswerving loyalty to that kingdom, where He had his ultimate citizenship, was destined to bring Him to the Cross—well might He pray, "Thy kingdom come." He lived not to do His own will but the will of One who sent Him, "as in heaven so on earth." He whose life for

long periods was less secure in the appointments of comfort than the foxes with their holes or the birds of the air with their nests, He who had nowhere to lay His head, could ask with the note of sincerity, "Give us this day our daily bread." He could urge every man to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," for He would hang upon the Cross looking into the faces of those who had driven the nails through His hands and had pressed down upon His brow the crown of thorns, saying, "Father forgive them." And when He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, He could lay upon the lips of men for all time that firm appeal, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

This brief prayer contains no "vain repetitions." The man who uses it is not striving to be heard for His "much speaking." It is a clear, concise, cogent appeal to God. Its simplicity, its directness, its adequacy, lift it into a class by itself. We are not enjoined to pray always and only in just those terms but "after this manner." The Lord's Prayer may well indicate the scope, the method and the spirit of acceptable and effectual prayer.

It is significant that its first word is "Our." Prayer can only come aright from a heart conscious of its social obligations and with a sympathetic interest in the needs of others. Its second word is "Father," for no man can utter even two words of genuine prayer unless he has the filial spirit in his own heart and is striving to bear himself toward God as a son. And five of the six petitions which follow have to do with those interests which are spiritual rather than temporal. When we pray "after this manner" we pray in the spirit and after the method, as well as in the name of Jesus.

In my appeal to the example of Jesus Christ as fur-

nishing further warrant for my faith in prayer, I am not falling back upon the uncertain props to be found in a religion of authority. It is for each man to decide for himself and at his own risk where the truth lies. No external power can lift from him that burden of responsibility. But somehow I feel that I am in the best of company when I am striving to do as Jesus did. When some confident little man of meager spiritual build tells me with an air of assurance that he has become too intelligent and too advanced to think of praying, I am not disturbed by that fact. I think of the quality of his life, the measure of his insight into the deeper questions of human duty and privilege, the frail and passing impress which he is making upon the life of his race, as compared with the life, the insight and the impress of One who has taken the moral government of the world upon His shoulder as none other ever did. And then I move ahead serenely, praying to the Father who seeth all this, even as my Master prayed in the days of His flesh.

When I listen closely I seem to hear this busy, restless age of ours saying with a new note of insistence, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." The Walker Trust of the University of St. Andrew in those trying days of 1916 sent forth this impressive appeal and made its offer of five hundred dollars for the best essay upon this fundamental topic of prayer.

"At this time of world tragedy the significance of prayer in daily life is everywhere becoming more widely recognized and it is felt that the time may have come for gathering together a record of the thoughts of those who have recognized its meaning and power and are willing to share their experience with others. With this end in view the Walker Trustees invite essays on the meaning, the reality

and the power of prayer, its place and value to the individual, to the church and to the state, in every day affairs of life, in the healing of sickness and disease, in times of distress and national danger and in relation to national ideals and world progress."

It is significant that a great historic university should thus undertake such an inquiry and service. The response was world wide. Essays on prayer were sent in from the ends of the earth. The first prize was awarded (be it said to our honor, in the presence of those who think of us oftentimes as a people too largely given over to the pursuit of material ends) to an American clergyman in Baltimore. And the cordial and extended welcome given by the thoughtful people of all lands to these essays upon their publication in book form has been one of the impressive signs of these sad times.

But there are certain intellectual difficulties standing in the way of a complete trust in the value of prayer which must be frankly faced. I feel that they may all be gathered under four main heads:

A. We are told that because God is wise and good He will do whatever may be best for us without our asking Him. There are those who maintain that the mere asking is in itself an act of impertinence, as implying either that God does not know and needs to be informed or that He is remiss in the performance of his duty and must be urged to meet the full obligations of His perfect goodness.

Will God give us what is best for us without our asking? The more fundamental question is, "Can He?" Can He give a prayerless man what that man needs most of all?

Here is the father of two boys, ten and twelve years of age! The older boy speaks to his father, brings to him the

varied interests and problems of his own unfolding life, seeks counsel and guidance at the hands of that larger experience, strives in all the ways open to him to deepen and strengthen the sense of comradeship between himself and his father.

The younger boy never speaks to his father at all—he takes his inner life out from under the eye of his father, apart from his fellowship into a far country. Let that father be as strong, as wise and as good as he may be, can he do what is best for the boy who never speaks to him? He can house both boys, feed them both, clothe them both, pay the terms bills at school for them, provide in every way for the outward necessities of both sons alike. But it needs no word of mine to suggest the tragic loss sustained by the boy who never speaks to his father nor the sense of tragic failure in that father's heart upon finding his generous purposes thus thwarted by the lack of response and coöperation.

It is true that God causes the sun to shine upon the evil and the good; He sends rain upon the just and the unjust alike. He treats all men with a certain broad impartiality up to a certain point. But His broad impartiality goes a certain distance and then stops. The sun will warm a saint or a rascal or a rat without distinction if they stand out together where the sun may shine upon them. A man can be rained on no matter what sort of a man he may be at heart. But there are certain things which God does not and cannot send alike upon the just and the unjust, upon the prayerful and the prayerless. He does not send forgiveness, renewal, the gift of His grace and the enriching enjoyment of His presence to the man who persists in being unjust and prayerless. In the nature of the case He cannot. Here are transactions higher and more important

than being rained on which cannot be carried on without willingness and coöperation on both sides.

It rests with me as to how much prayer shall accomplish in my life, as to how much the goodness of God shall mean in my personal experience. When I am at my home in New Haven if I wish my friend in New York to talk to me over the telephone, I must take down the receiver and listen. He may be ever so willing and ready to speak to me; he may have that to impart which would be for my joy and benefit. He cannot talk to me from New York until I have done my part at my end of the line. Prayer is the act of taking down the receiver and finding one's self in blessed communication with one's Maker. The Heavenly Father is broadcasting his help constantly but my own receiving apparatus must be adjusted and attuned to those wave lengths if I would enjoy my share of that help. God does not and cannot give to every man whatever is best for him unless the man meets the necessary conditions at his end of the line by living a prayerful life.

B. We are told that God will not refuse to do that which is best for others simply because we fail to pray for them. Here we have the objection urged against the value of intercessory prayer by some people who gladly recognize a certain subjective influence upon the man who prays. Will God indeed withhold certain good gifts from others because of my neglect in failing to pray on their behalf?

We need not flinch in the presence of the dilemma which this question seems to create. The moment we admit that one life may influence another for good or for ill, we are in for the whole program of interaction in human society. It extends all the way up and all the way down and all the way through. There are benefits innumerable which will

not come to my children, to my neighbor, to those unprivileged lives on some back street, to those untaught people in lands which lack the knowledge of our Christian faith, unless I do my part. If those other lives are to enjoy all that it lies within my power and the power of my fellows to bring to them, we are under obligations to put forth the necessary efforts on their behalf. And when once we recognize the interaction and the interdependence of all lives which sustain or may sustain any relations the one to the other, we cannot avoid saying, "Yes, there are benefits which God will withhold from other lives if we fail in our prayers on their behalf."

For certain reasons, which must have seemed to Him both wise and good, God has chosen to work mainly through human agencies. He feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, visits the sick and imprisoned by the action of His humane spirit upon the minds and hearts of those who are thus moved to humane effort. He is acting steadily upon the inner lives of men according to this same method. The words I speak, the deeds I do, the spirit and temper I cherish within, the atmosphere I bear with me, the very expression on my face, are steadily registering upon the lives of those about me an influence for their help or for their hurt according to the prevailing quality of my own life. And in addition to any wholesome influence which my personal qualities may thus exert, if I live a prayerful life commending those people and their interests to the favor of God in honest petition on their behalf, I extend in most potent fashion that influence for good.

No man liveth unto himself, nor dieth unto himself, nor prayeth unto himself, nor can he do or be anything without facing squarely the fact of his social responsibility in all these fields. And when he stands, or fails to stand,

in that highest exercise of thought, feeling and purpose which is expressed in faithful prayer, he is keenly aware of the high significance of his fidelity or of his failure.

The prayers of an honest heart reach out in mystic fashion touching interests innumerable, enabling the man of faith to build for human betterment better and more broadly than he knows. The bees, busy with their own affairs in securing food for the coming winter, all unaware of the service rendered by their action to other, wider interests, do nevertheless carry pollen from blossom to blossom, fertilizing and perfecting whole orders of vegetable life which might otherwise perish from the earth but for their silent, unconscious ministry. So we as humble creatures of an Infinite Purpose may, if we steadily function on all the higher levels open to us, serve by our faithful petitions interests vast and incomprehensible to us at our present stage of development but lying open and bare to the eye of Him who seeth every precious thing.

C. We are told that in this vast universe whose immensity grows upon us year by year through the discoveries of astronomic science, the individual life and the petty interests which make up that life are altogether too insignificant to expect or to merit the notice of an Infinite Being.

All this has an imposing sound and to some uninstructed minds it may seem to smack of commendable modesty. But the difficulty suggested is only a bugaboo arising from the mixing up of the thought of physical vastness with the consideration of spiritual values. The affectionate mother, finite in all her functions, finds it easily possible to carry in her mind and heart the interests of a dozen children. She loves them all and can bring to bear at any moment upon some passing interest of the youngest child, the

strength, the wisdom and the affection of her own inner life. When we look toward the Infinite Being before whom we stand, in whose likeness we are potentially created, we find that His moral interest is on such a scale as to call for and insist upon an endless and numberless series of lives to occupy his thought and to serve as a field for the expression of his love.

It is one of the marks of mastery that it can include and direct things great and small. The president of one of the great railway systems in the middle west was at one time a man who had come up all the way from the ranks. He began as a brakeman upon the least important of all the freight trains which came and went. He knew railroading from Alpha to Omega. When he became the head of the system his associates sometimes marveled at his knowledge of detail. He could tell exactly how much coal and oil were needed to propel an engine and draw a certain number of cars over a given number of miles of track upon the system which he directed. If more than that amount was being used he knew that the engineer and the fireman had been wasting the resources of the road. He was equally conversant with the wider problems connected with the maintenance of morale, the effectiveness of organization and the adequate financing of the mighty system of interests.

He too was only finite but he had a mind for things great and small. The One who sitteth in the heavens would laugh at the puny problems which His own economy of grace might seem to encounter. "He telleth the number of the stars," the psalmist said, "and He healeth the broken in heart." He keeps the planets moving upon their appointed orbits on schedule time and He draws near to comfort a woman who has lost her husband or her child.

The power of gravitation never overlooks anything nor forgets anything—it matters not whether it is a pound of feathers or a ton of lead or the round globe itself. No more does He to whom the power of gravitation and all other powers are modes of His Being.

D. We are told that an answer to prayer would involve the violation of Nature's laws; it would interfere with "the uniformity of Nature." If this were true it would present a serious obstacle to our trust in prayer. The great apostle expressly warned us against the folly of imagining that we move out from under the reign of law when we enter the moral realm and come to deal with spiritual values. "Be not deceived—God is not fooled! What men sow, they reap. He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. He that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." There is an even-handed justice at work in the whole moral order where we stand, from which there is no escape. The moral universe is orderly and the varying outcomes predictable.

If I thought for a moment that my prayer might interfere with the operation of the great forces, the power of gravitation, the law of chemical attraction or the organic energies of developing life, I should hesitate to pray lest I might mix up things in a world where it is of the utmost importance that men should know what to expect from one day to another. If a lot of other people also were praying and introducing similar confusion, it might easily lead to intolerable complications. I do not believe for a moment that the through traffic of the divine purpose, as carried upon the great trunk lines of cosmic activities, will be shunted off on some siding at any hour to give the right

of way to the local train of my own personal desires simply because I am on my knees.

But the material order is by no means a closed circle into which no spiritual energies can possibly enter to modify the result. The reign of law, as we all know, is not incompatible with the fact of personal volition or initiative taken on many a field by conscious intelligence. The human will and purpose are constantly playing in and making themselves felt in the operation of those great natural laws which are but the habits of the Creator.

Here is a piece of money which I hold in my hand! If I should drop it, the half dollar would go straight toward the center of the earth. The power of gravitation which is holding the planets true to their courses and enabling the moon to draw the water in the oceans around after her in mighty tides, would take immediate charge of that bit of silver just as if it had nothing else to do. There I dropped it! It has fallen to the floor on its way toward the center of the earth.

Here is my watch! In a moment I intend also to drop it. There, I dropped it! But I caught it in my other hand when it had fallen only a foot or more and thus it did not go to the floor. Was there in the second case any violation of the law of gravitation? The power of gravitation was there all the while acting according to its age-long habit. It took hold of the watch just as it did with the half dollar. There was not the slightest interference with "the uniformity of Nature?" Yet by my own will I changed the result when I dropped this second bit of material, saving it from a fall to the floor.

The illustration is simplicity itself but our whole case is there. By our human volition we are constantly modifying the outcome which would follow if the material order

suffered no interference. Would you then undertake to tell me that when my personal volition finds expression in some action in every way more potent and significant that I do not modify the result? When, for example, I pray for myself, for you, for my home, for my neighbors, for Yale University, for the city where I live, for the country which I love best and for the wider interests of God's growing kingdom! Do you believe that this action of my will does not affect the result?

The power of prayer is not a lawless force nor does it seek to introduce disorder into a methodical universe. It operates according to its own great laws. It lies within the will and purpose of the Most High who has ordained all of these forces and values for the sacred ends He has in view. And when a man prays in honest, faithful fashion he introduces into the situation with which he undertakes to deal, a new factor entering decisively into the final result. When any man gathers up his intelligence, his sympathy, his aspiration, his trust, his high resolve, and sets them flowing Godward, in his fervent prayer on behalf of certain precious interests which he has at heart, we have an added factor in that total situation which will have to be reckoned with.

If the dull, lifeless moon yonder in the heavens can, by what we call the power of gravitation (in which every one believes and the nature of which no one understands), enter into communication with the earth, drawing the waters of all the seven seas around after her in tides which ebb and flow, do you tell me that I, a sentient, conscious being, cannot connect with the living God, or that He cannot connect with me when I stand before Him in my best estate in the act of prayer? Do you tell me that He cannot lift me, and those for whom I pray, to higher levels

of thought, of feeling and of purpose by the direct impress of His own mighty life upon this soul of mine?

The man who wrote "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" laid hold of a great truth but if we were to press his assertion on all fours in a hard and fast manner, we might feel that he rather overstated it. The heavens and the earth are not made yet—they are in the making. We are all helping to make or to mar them according to the measure of our intelligence and the quality of our moral purpose. We too are looking for that "new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." We are working all the while for human betterment if our hearts are right, with our eyes and our minds upon that better world order which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And into that high task human volition in all the higher exercises to which it can be called is steadily entering, not in lawless manner but according to the laws of the kingdom of heaven.

The wise physician can instruct us here. We have moved away beyond the mood in which George Eliot wrote in one of her greatest stories—"If any medical man had come to Middlemarch with the reputation of having very definite religious views or of being given to prayer, there would have been a general presumption against his medical skill." We have reached the point where it is a commonplace that "the wise physician welcomes every aid, social, or religious, in his fight against disease. He is often a man of idealistic temperament, conscious of the august mysteries of life and death and of the great limitations which beset his own knowledge and skill. His sympathy is with the patient in his search for a rational faith. He knows that trust in a holy, loving, gracious Spirit

inspires the hope and serenity which contribute to life and strength."

The doctor who would emphasize the value of fresh air, wise diet, rest and the avoidance of contagion in the treatment of his patients but steadily ignore the value of mental and spiritual forces in the gaining and maintenance of sound health, would be regarded to-day as being as unscientific as would be the pietist who in the supposed interest of his religious faith would stake everything upon his piety and ignore meanwhile all that Science has revealed in hygiene, in medicine and in surgery.

It was the Superintendent of the Bethlehem Royal Hospital who said at a meeting of the British Medical Association, "As an alienist and one whose whole life has been concerned with the sufferings of the mind, I would state that of all hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depressed spirits and all the miserable consequences of a distressed mind, I would give the first place to the simple habit of prayer."

We are witnessing a tremendous reaction against that hard, narrow materialism of a generation which now humbly confesses itself to have been too hasty in its judgment and altogether incomplete in the offer it made of a competent philosophy of life. We have moved toward that finer synthesis where all the forces, which can be made to act for human betterment and social progress, may strike hands and move ahead in effective coöperation. There are available higher resources of power which may steadily be utilized for the tasks to which we are called. "For more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

The man of sense seeks ever to pray in the name, that is to say in the spirit, of Christ and with the great underlying principle, "If we ask anything according to His

will He heareth us," fully in mind. Divine power in order to be divine must be exercised in a moral way. The sudden granting of some benefit to one morally unfit to receive it, to one whose fundamental attitude was not the desire to have his will brought into harmony with the divine will, would become at once an act immoral. The Maker of heaven and earth does not resign the control of the universe into our hands even when we kneel down. He has His own purposes and we are to think of our prayers always as operating within and in harmony with the will of Him whose children we are.

Here is a river flowing calmly but strongly and steadily in a certain direction! How much better I can swim in that stream when I put myself into the current and swim with it rather than against it or across it! When I pray, I am not trying to change or to overcome the current of God's gracious will. I am seeking rather, by striving to pray in the spirit of Christ, to put myself into the stream of His desire for me and for all mankind. For "His will is our peace" and the mighty energy of His will, when once we find ourselves in agreement with it, bears us on and up into life eternal.

V

THE USE OF THE BIBLE

WE have here a book which refuses to be ignored. On the basis of its wide currency alone, if it had no other and worthier claims to distinction, it challenges the attention of every man who can read. For centuries it has been "the best seller." When a hundred thousand copies of a popular novel have been sold, the story is regarded as a success. If the sales reach three or four hundred thousand the fact is heralded abroad, even though in a few years the sales should cease altogether, and the book be forgotten. Here is a book which was completed eighteen hundred years ago, yet it is still selling at the rate of over six millions of copies a year. Two publishing houses alone, one in this country and one in Britain, have printed and sold—I am taking these figures from the Encyclopedia Britannica—more than seven hundred millions of copies of this book. It goes without saying that every thoughtful, well-educated man will desire to know something of the contents of this book which has gained such a hold upon the attention of the race.

There is nothing provincial in the quality of this amazing interest. The book was written originally in Hebrew and Greek but it has been translated into all the leading languages of earth and into more than four hundred of its less important tongues and dialects. It is read from the

rising of the sun unto the going down of the same. It goes into every land. Its leaves are for the healing of the nations. It speaks in Pentecostal fashion to every man in the tongue in which he was born. It holds converse every day in the year with a multitude which no man can number, of all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues.

Its germinal relation to other literatures adds further to its distinction. How it has furnished both theme and inspiration for literary masterpieces in all the lands of earth! Dante in his "Divine Comedy," Milton in "Paradise Lost," and Goethe in "Faust," based their work directly on scriptural themes. Shakespeare shows on many a page his indebtedness in both idea and phrase to the Bible. Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning are filled with biblical references—one cannot read their best poems intelligently without the background of an acquaintance with scripture. Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold throughout their writings reveal the fact that their minds were saturated with the teaching of scripture and their tongues attuned to its rhythmic utterance.

The Bible has furnished theme and inspiration for human masterpieces in many another field. In music, the leading Oratorios, which stand well up in the front rank of musical composition, "The Messiah" and "Elijah," "St. Paul" and "Stabat Mater," "Saul," "Eli," "Esther" and the "Mount of Olives," were all developed from Biblical subjects. In architecture, the noblest buildings on earth, as judged by their size, their cost, their majestic beauty, and the care and time which went into their construction, are the cathedrals which house and express the spiritual impulses springing out of the teachings of the Bible. In

painting and sculpture, Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" and Rubens' "Descent from the Cross," Michael Angelo's "Moses" and "David" and his canvas of the "Last Judgment," all declare the origin of the great ideas which called them into glorious being. The great creative eras in all the arts since the Bible was completed have had close connection with the mighty themes of religion.

The Bible has exerted a practical influence upon the thought and life of the world which is unmatched. What other single book has entered so widely, so steadily, so decisively into the shaping of men's thoughts about God, into the furnishing of men's minds with adequate moral principles and standards, into the formation of their ultimate ideals and into the building of character. Its unapproached primacy through all this Christian era in purifying the affections, in making the moral judgment sane, in strengthening the will, in opening up deeper sources of motive and stimulus for right living has made it "a book of final values for all who would live nobly." It stands unique to-day among all the volumes which have come from the pens and the brains of men, not by virtue of some ecclesiastical decree formulated on its behalf, but because it has stood the test of use on all these varied fields of human interest.

We can say all this heartily and yet be aware that in recent years there has come on the one hand a more scholarly and reliable method in the study and interpretation of this book, and on the other hand a rigid, mechanical treatment of scripture with a fresh insistence upon a certain dogma of inerrancy which seems to many of us altogether impossible.

I was on a train a few months ago when I drew out of

my pocket a small Bible to look over the lessons which I was to use next day at the college where I was to preach. The man who shared the seat with me was, as I judged from his hands and his clothes, a working man. When I finished reading and put the book back into my pocket, he said to me courteously, "Do you believe it all?"

"No," I replied. "I do not believe it all. I believe all of it that is true."

"How can you tell," he asked, "what is true and what is not?"

"By the use of my own moral judgment," I said, "and by the test of experience."

"Have we any right," he asked, "to believe any of it unless we believe all of it?"

I assured him that in my judgment we had that right; that indeed the only possible attitude for a thoughtful mind was one of wise discrimination; that we are expressly told in the Bible itself to study to show ourselves "approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The obligation is laid upon us to separate that which is merely local and temporary in the Bible from that which is universal and abiding, that which is incidental from that which is vital and essential. Then we talked together until we reached our destination about the truth or the falsity of the teachings of the Bible.

Let me raise the same question here at the beginning of this lecture—Are the teachings of the Bible true? It is a question which is being asked with much insistence in certain quarters. Some people are asking it with a sneer—they would like to believe that the teachings of the Bible are not true; it would still further relieve their easy-going consciences to be able to say that the Bible is false. Other

people are asking the same question with a look of concern —they are afraid that by the shifting of mental attitude in the interpretation of the Bible, the eternal verities are slipping from our grasp.

Now as a question of plain, straight fact, "Are the teachings of the Bible true?" It all depends upon what you mean by "true." Are all these narratives literal and exact records of sober, historical fact? Are all the scientific references and conceptions contained in this ancient literature in agreement with the well-establishd conclusions of modern knowledge? That is one question.

But there is another question to be asked in the same breath—Are the teachings of the Bible, as interpreted by competent knowledge, true to life, true to our deepest needs, true to our highest aspirations, true in the sense that the acceptance of them would get us where we ought to go in personal character and in social well-being? And that is another pair of shoes altogether. Here the issue has shifted since the days when I was a boy in college asking questions touching this very matter.

The pastor of one of our prominent eastern churches has discussed this changed approach in a little book which many of you no doubt have read—"The Christian Idea in the Modern World," by Raymond Calkins. "The question as to the truth or falsity of our Christian faith," he says, "no longer turns upon the authority or accuracy of some of these books in the Bible. There was a time when men thought that it did. Huxley thought that it did. Gladstone thought that it did." William Jennings Bryan thinks that it does to-day.

Does Genesis agree with geology? Was the world made in six days or in six million years? Was man created in a single instant of time or did he come as the climax of a

long process of development? Did Moses write the Pentateuch and David the Psalms and Solomon all of the Proverbs? Is the book of Jonah fact or fiction, history or parable? When Robert G. Ingersoll was going about the country, speaking as one having authority to a lot of people who did not know any better, these were burning questions. The people who were pious and the people who were otherwise, felt that if these narratives were not literally and exactly true, then the Bible was false and the Christian religion was doomed. But most of us have passed away beyond all that. The fate of the Bible or of our Christian faith does not turn upon these questions.

Here is the vital question to-day—Do the teachings of the Bible, not as judged by some insignificant detail in statement or by some stray reference caught out of its setting, but as judged by the main conclusions to which they bring us, afford us those conceptions of God, of man, of duty, of destiny, which reason and conscience may accept as valid beyond any other competing conceptions? Do the teachings of the Bible afford us helpful guidance when we would think upon the obligations and high privileges of human life at its best? Does the Bible prove itself "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path" when subjected to the pragmatic test by those who are seeking to walk in those ways of thought, feeling and purpose which tend upward? In a word, do the teachings of this book make men wise unto salvation and furnish them thoroughly for all good work? If the Bible does this in satisfying measure, then its teachings are true,—"true to life, true to our deepest needs, true to our highest aspirations, true in the sense that they get us where we ought to go."

I am well aware that to many of my fellow Christians this general appraisal of the value of the Bible would seem entirely inadequate and unsatisfying. We have witnessed, not in an untaught period or section of the world's life but here in our own land in this Twentieth Century, the amazing spectacle of a popular evangelist going from city to city, addressing congregations almost without precedent in size in the whole history of religious effort, and declaring with manifest acceptance on the part of great numbers of his hearers that he believes in the Bible as "the infallible word of God from lid to lid"; that he regards every word and every syllable of it as an inerrant revelation from the Most High. And he has not been slow to voice his condemnation of all those who take any other view.

We have seen an institution of theological learning for the training of religious teachers and leaders chartered under the laws of the State of California and enrolling hundreds of students, declaring in its constitution, "The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are without error or misstatement in their moral and spiritual teachings and as a record of historical facts. They are without error or defect of any kind. And to this statement of belief every officer, teacher and worker must subscribe once a year." The man who does not regard this claim as to the inerrancy of scripture so stoutly advocated by the Fundamentalists, as a live, important issue in American Christianity to-day simply does not know what kind of a world he is living in.

The claim of inerrancy for the Bible can be readily discredited by any one who will read not theories about the Bible or fervent declamation uttered on its behalf but

the Bible itself. Here on the first two pages of the Bible are two accounts of the creation! They differ decidedly in the statements made as to the order of creation. In the first account, the inorganic world is created first, then the various orders of vegetable life, then the lower forms of marine life,—"the waters bring forth moving creatures that have life"—to be followed later by birds and reptiles and vertebrates. Last of all, as the very climax of creation, man himself, male and female, is brought into being in the image and likeness of his Maker.

In the second account of the creation the man is formed first and then the Creator plants a garden for his home and causes to grow from the ground trees bearing fruit suited for his food. Then the Creator forms the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air and brings them to this man to be named. Last of all, the man having found no suitable companion among the other animals, the Creator, as a kind of lovely afterthought, makes, from a rib removed from the man's side while he was asleep, a woman to serve as his helpmeet.

Now it is plain, even from a hasty reading, that these two accounts cannot both be literally and exactly correct—that is to say, inerrant—because of their disagreement with each other. And it is also plain that as infallible statements of historic and scientific fact they both break down at certain points under the weight of assured knowledge.

The first chapter of Genesis read as a noble, religious poem, with its constantly recurring refrain at the end of each stanza,—"The evening and the morning were one day," "the evening and the morning were the second day"—as the author passes from period to period, has real worth. It is a picture of an unfolding process in the

world order, asserting that back of all this ascending series of created things is the power and purpose of God. It has in it a wealth of beauty and value. But when the claim is made that both of these narratives of the creation are to be regarded as infallible statements of literal fact, it is difficult to take the assertion seriously.

This is but a single illustration taken from the opening pages of the Bible. Other obstacles lying in the way of the claim of inerrancy could be cited almost indefinitely. We have two accounts of the deluge, differing as to the cause of the flood, as to the length of time it continued, as to the number of clean beasts to be taken into the ark by the family which was to survive. These two varying accounts cannot both be infallibly correct as statements of fact.

In the Book of Samuel composed by the prophetic school of Old Testament writers, we are told that "the Lord moved David to number Israel." But in the Book of Chronicles, written by the priestly school, the statement is made that "Satan provoked David to number Israel." Here is quite a divergence of statement as to the real facts in the case! Did God do it or the Devil?

We have three versions of the Ten Commandments. The first and oldest, the only one designated in the Bible itself as containing "the Ten Commandments," is found in the 34th chapter of Exodus. Here is this ancient code:

1. Thou shalt worship no other God.
2. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.
3. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread.
4. Every first born is mine.
5. Six days thou shalt work but on the seventh thou shalt rest.

6. Thou shalt observe the feast of weeks and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.

7. Thou shalt not offer the bread of my sacrifice with leaven.

8. The sacrifice of the feast of the Passover shall not be left unto the morning.

9. Thou shalt bring the first fruits of thy land unto the House of the Lord.

10. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

It moves entirely in the field of ceremonial religion in a way altogether natural to any race in the earlier and lower stages of its spiritual development. The hour for the nobler and more important moral distinctions touching the sacredness of life and purity, of truth and property had not yet come. In that 34th chapter of Exodus immediately following this primitive code we read, "He wrote upon tables of stone the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."

The second version of the Ten Commandments is found in that portion of the Priests' Code contained in the 20th chapter of Exodus. This version, which is the one commonly taught in our Sunday schools and sometimes inscribed upon the walls of our churches, is so entirely familiar that it need not be quoted here. It makes a distinct advance upon the earlier code. Ritual has small place; right action touching the fundamental interests of human society bulks large. In addition to those injunctions which have to do with the safeguarding of the sacredness of God's name and day and spiritual nature, men are enjoined to show their fidelity to the One before whom no other object of worship shall be enthroned, by maintaining the sacredness of life and truth, property, domestic peace and reputation as vital factors in human well-being.

The third version of the Ten Commandments is found in the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy. It agrees substantially with the second, but shows certain modifications made in the interest of a varying religious conception. This third version belongs to the prophetic school of religion. It shows the result of this other point of view in the reason assigned for Sabbath keeping.

In Exodus 20, which belongs to the priests' code, the reason given for Sabbath keeping was that in six days God had created the heavens and the earth and had rested the seventh day. In imitation of His holy example men were to order their weeks in like manner. The first chapter of Genesis, which furnished the idea of the world having been created in six days, also belonged to the priests' code.

But the prophetic author of the book of Deuteronomy would have none of that priestly conception in his version of the Ten Commandments. Here the reason for Sabbath keeping is stated as follows:

"Keep the seventh day to sanctify it as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee . . . in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son nor thy daughter, thy manservant nor thy maidservant, thine ox nor thine ass, nor thy cattle nor the stranger within thy gates, that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou; for remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt and the Lord thy God brought thee out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the seventh day."

The reason for Sabbath keeping was to be found in humane consideration for those who toil rather than in a ritual obligation, as stated in the other code. In gratitude to God, who had brought them out of Egypt where

for their enslaved ancestors there had been no truce of God, no day of rest from toil, they were to keep the Sabbath day themselves and they were to keep it for their employees, that their servants also might rest. In this version of the Ten Commandments there is no mention of a world made in six days or of any ceremonial reason for the observance of one day in seven as a holy day.

When we come to the memorable inscription upon the Cross of Christ, written in letters of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, as recorded in the four gospels, we find that no two of them are alike in the exact wording of that inscription though they all agree as to the main idea expressed. It is instantly apparent that three of them at least are not inerrant as statements of fact regarding the precise words which were actually contained in that inscription.

Let it be remembered in all this discussion that inerrancy is inerrancy. No paring down of such a claim to the mere assertion that we have here "a high measure of substantial accuracy" will satisfy that assertion.

These divergences are not confined to mere verbal inaccuracies. It is perfectly clear that the priestly and the prophetic schools of religious instruction stood far apart in their points of emphasis and in their conception of that which is vital in religion. If we were to confine our study of scripture to the Book of Leviticus and other portions of the Priests' Code, we might well believe that a man's eternal salvation depended at that time upon his painstaking observance of ceremonial requirements, even to the proper burning of the two kidneys and the fat in animal sacrifice. But when we turn to the great prophets of the Eighth century before Christ, Amos and Hosea, Micah and Isaiah, we find in their utterances an open scorn for the

current ritual of that day as a positive hindrance to the cause of real religion. The offering of a thousand rams or of ten thousand rivers of oil in sacrifice would avail nothing. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good! And what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"

It is perfectly clear that one view as to the validity of our hope of life after death is taken by the skeptical author of the Book of Ecclesiastes and another view altogether is advanced by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians. It is perfectly clear that one view of the matter of divorce is advanced in the teaching attributed to Moses, and another view altogether is uttered by Christ. Jesus openly stigmatizes the earlier view as being due to "the hardness of men's hearts," prefaced though it was by a "thus saith the Lord." It is perfectly clear that the grim law of retaliation, given supposedly according to the rude belief of that earlier time with divine sanction, is brushed aside entirely by the Master in the interest of a nobler method of treating our enemies.

It is clear that some of the early apostles made serious mistakes in the view they took as to the relation of the Gentiles to the Christian church. It became necessary for the Apostle Paul, who saw with clearer eyes, to withstand Peter to his face and to straighten him out.

It is clear that there was change and progress in the views of Paul himself, as expressed in his earlier and later letters. There was a time when he wrote to the Corinthians in scornful terms regarding marriage, as being at best an unworthy concession to the flesh on the part of those who found it better to marry than to suffer from uncontrollable desire. He insisted at that time that the celibate state was to be preferred—"He that is unmarried careth

for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife." In his later letters Paul would have the married life nothing less than sacramental, urging husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church.

We enter the sacred confines of the Bible—with heads uncovered and feet unshod it may be—prepared to make those intellectual and moral distinctions which men are constantly making in their daily lives. We simply cannot get on with any such shibboleth as "The Bible is the inerrant word of God and infallible in every part," as a guide for thought and action. In spite of the definite findings of the Council at Jerusalem which claimed for itself divine guidance, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us"—believing Christians to-day do not "abstain from blood" when they eat their roast beef rare, or from "things strangled" when they make their purchases of poultry for their tables. They make whatever distinctions are made between clean and unclean meats, upon hygienic rather than upon ritual grounds. They openly disregard the letter even of so late a book as the Book of Acts. The letter killeth, so they follow the spirit which makes alive.

The matter is much more serious than any petty squabble about words and names. In the face of reliable evidence which modern Biblical scholarship has set before us in such clear terms that even he who runs may read, to make the claim that "the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are without error or misstatement in either moral and spiritual teaching or as a record of historic facts" is, as William F. Bade has said, "to create that

serious situation in which faith and truth must part company. In the minds of many it creates the mistaken impression that they must choose between their religious faith and their loyalty to the truth. The saddest aspect of the matter is that armies of young people, trained in school and college to think true to the evidence, resolve the fictitious dilemma in favor of unbelief. Their choice is indeed a moral choice because they prefer truth to dogma. Their loss is the penalty which must be paid for the defense of the truth by untruth."

We cannot play tricks on the trained intelligence of mankind in the claims we make about the Bible and get away with it. If we should succeed in getting away with it for a time with certain carefully selected groups of people, who feel that there is something pious and trustful in hiding their heads in the sand while their sentiments go marching on, the day of reckoning, which is forever on the way, would soon show us that the cause of truth and righteousness which we were supposed to defend had gone down at that very point in shameful defeat. "Ye shall know the truth," the Master said, "and the truth shall make you free." To all those who are tempted to any sort of intellectual shuffling in the interest of this man-made dogma as to the inerrancy of Scripture, I would commend those words of the apostle, "Not walking in craftiness or handling the word of God deceitfully but by the manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every one's conscience in the sight of God."

It is only by a species of mental dexterity that the scriptures in every part can be identified with "the word of God" or made to appear as sustaining the burden of that claim of complete inerrancy sometimes recklessly imposed

upon them by their misguided friends. It was Dean Frederick W. Farrar of Canterbury, a man who combined learning with piety, clear insight with spiritual devotion, who said, "Not once throughout the New Testament is the Old Testament called 'the word of God' and not once through all the Scriptures is the Bible called 'the word of God,' although that phrase itself occurs more than three hundred times." "The word of the Lord" which came to the prophet of old, "the word of God" which is "living, powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword" was, not some revered bit of paper and ink but a form of spiritual energy, divine in quality as those inspired men believed, impressing itself directly upon the heart and soul of the man to whom it came.

The Bible was not dictated to certain "sacred penmen of the Holy Ghost" as I remember hearing our minister once call them when I was a boy. These great truths were wrought into the very souls of those men as they too met temptation, faced duty, bore burdens and carried their sorrows, seeking and finding divine help for their high endeavor. By the recognition of this fact, the Bible has been changed "from a file of books into a line of men." They too were living men, sharing our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows, facing the problems and perplexities we face, bearing the burden of the same misgivings and unanswered questions, saying right out loud on these pages of Scripture what they had come to feel and know with that conviction produced by personal experience.

Here we stand openly and boldly with the apostle of old! "Do we then make void the law through faith? Nay we establish the law." Do we then by thorough, open-minded, honest research as to the origin, content and meaning of these sacred scriptures make of no effect the

Bible as a message from God to the soul of man, as a divinely blessed ministry to the inner life of the race? No, a thousand times no! We multiply its power of appeal to the discriminating mind a hundred fold. The more thorough knowledge of the actual meaning of this varied literature contained in our Bible comes not to destroy but to fulfill.

How the literal, mechanical use of Scripture has retarded the advance of real religion! All kinds of partisans may, if they please, find in the Bible well worded confirmation for their pet prejudices when they are allowed to pick and choose in this great department store of proof texts. It has been well pointed out that "the Roman Catholic finds in the Bible the primacy of Peter and the supremacy of the church. The Protestant finds in it the strongest refutation of the whole method of sacerdotalism." The Baptist finds that true baptism is only by immersion and meant only for adults. The Presbyterian finds warrant for sprinkling and for the baptism of infants. The Kaiser found in the Bible the Lord of Hosts leading his Teutonic followers to battle for imperialism. The Quaker finds only the Prince of Peace, declaring that "they who take the sword shall perish by the sword." The stern Calvinist finds the wrath of God burning on these pages with a sure prospect of unending retribution for those who leave this world unsaved. The Universalist finds there the promise of the ultimate restoration of every soul to a knowledge of the truth and to the blessed experience of eternal life. The Mormon finds phrases to bolster up his Polygamy. The Shaker finds warrant for disparaging all wedlock. The rest of us find encouragement to believe that the ideal state is for one man and one woman to dwell

together with the children born of their union in all the intimacies and sanctities of holy affection.

In the mirror of the Bible every convinced partisan may, if he comes with a closed mind, behold nothing but the reflected oddities of his own particular face.

> "In religion
> What damned error but some sober brow
> Will bless it and approve it with a text,
> Hiding the grossness with fair ornament."

Our only safety lies in a more honest reliance upon better methods of Biblical study, in a steadier trust in the main trend and drift of Bible teaching and in our readiness to follow those higher conclusions to which it brings us at last when we sense the total effect of its divine ministry to the spiritual life of the race.

Why should not we, in the interests of truth and of moral effectiveness alike, frankly recognize the incompleteness of some of those earlier insights expressed by the writers of holy writ who saw the realities of religion through a glass darkly! They suffered limitation from an immature judgment of things spiritual natural to that period of their development. The meager knowledge they possessed was precious in those days for there was no open vision, but it must be judged in the light of the grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ.

It was one of the keenest literary critics of his day, a lover and defender of true religion, who said, "The first step to a right understanding of the Bible is to understand that the language of the Bible is fluid and literary, not rigid, fixed and scientific." If the Bible had been written in New England by the clear white light of the Twentieth Century and if the writers themselves had been

men of prosaic habit of mind, accustomed to the use of the fact-recording Kodak and phonograph, we should have had a very different sort of Bible. We should have had one much less interesting and helpful. Our task of interpretation might have been easier but oh, so much less rewarding!

In literary study every man who knows his right hand from his left recognizes the difference between poetry and prose. When he takes up his Bible and reads about a man who called for a longer day—"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon"—that he might win a more complete victory over the enemies of the divine purpose; when he reads that "the trees clapped their hands" and "the mountains skipped like lambs" and "the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord"; when he reads that under the persecution of a wicked king three young Hebrews walked loose, unhurt and with a sense of exalted fellowship in a furnace of fire heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, and came out without even the smell of fire in their garments, he knows of a truth that he is reading poetry. It has all the earmarks of poetry. It is free, bold, warm, sensuous, carrying in its folds majestic truths which will kindle the hearts of men to nobler action until time is no more.

Here in one of the noblest of all the Psalms we read, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust. . . . He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt thou trust."

Wings and feathers! The singer is voicing his feeling about God. He is portraying in true Oriental fashion

his confidence in the benefits of an overarching, protecting divine providence. He has no thought of uttering in literal prose fashion a philosophy of theism. He is not picturing the Deity as a gigantic bird, a huge winged creature of the skies. The very idea of attributing "wings and feathers" to the Supreme Being would be grotesque had not our familiarity with those bold phrases dulled our minds to the strangeness of them. He is a poet and a singer to whom we gladly accord the full measure of poetic license in making faith luminous.

Now on many a page of Holy Scripture we shall find a wealth of "wings and feathers," the presence of a symbolism employed by a people who lived more in their eyes than in their ears. They wrote after this manner that they might cause the ideas they cherished to live and move and have their being before our eyes in all their glorious impressiveness. The dry literal type of mind will be constantly misled, while the man who brings to his task of interpretation some adequate measure of moral imagination, some competent knowledge of the times and conditions under which these truths found expression and some worthy share of spiritual insight, will be constantly finding his way into a deeper knowledge of the eternal verities there portrayed.

The voice of the Lord God as He walked in the garden in the cool of the day; the heavenly visitors whom Abraham is represented as entertaining at the door of his tent on cakes and roast veal; the divine voice which spoke through the roar of the thunder at Sinai and the Being who by the aid of the lightning showed momentary glimpses of that glory which no man could see and live; the dramatic experience recorded in connection with the first crossing of the Jordan into the land of promise and the

startling manifestation of a power superhuman in the fall of the walls of Jericho—all these (with many other passages which have furnished battlefields across which the forces of literal inerrancy and of literary insight have advanced and retreated) belong to the poetry of that earlier day rather than to the prose history of sober material fact. The letter of any number of these stirring narratives would kill our confidence in the trustworthiness of the Bible but the spiritual truth they contain serves to make us more fully alive to the higher values there suggested.

We shall make little headway in our study of the Bible unless we frankly recognize the principle of growth. Here, as everywhere, it is first the blade, then by the process of organic development the ear, and only away late in the fall the fully ripened grain. The earth grew and the science of geology has laid bare fascinating vistas of the age-long process. Languages grow, literatures grow, political institutions grow, industrial organization grows, civilizations grow, religions grow. Each one of these mighty interests, with branches now innumerable, was once like a grain of mustard seed.

In like manner the Bible grew until it stands before us as the outcome and product of long periods of spiritual development. Men groped at first in thick darkness feeling after the truth if haply they might find it. Then with added insight they saw the great principles of life, uncertainly at first, as if they had been trees walking. Then in some measure they began to see their duties and their privileges face to face. With high hopes and hearts undaunted they were still looking ahead to that day when at last we shall know even as we are known.

The law of development has to be regarded steadily in Bible study as in Biology. The word "God" as it appears on the pages of our English Bibles contains always the same three familiar letters. But what a distance, not in years alone but in the measure of religious insight, lies between the use Deborah made of it in her narrow, bitter song, praising the cruel treachery of Jael, gloating over the misfortunes of her enemies, calling down maledictions upon their helplessness, and the use Isaiah made of the same word when in the name of God he called to the sinful people of his day, "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." How far it is from Deborah's God to Isaiah's God! What a further advance is made in the qualities ascribed to the One who is named as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The same three letters throughout and to be pronounced by the same vocal sounds, but the spiritual distance traversed by the meaning of the term is well-nigh immeasurable.

I am seeking in this lecture not only to indicate a more accurate appraisal of this varied literature contained in our Bible and a more competent method of interpretation—I am seeking also to suggest in practical fashion a worthier use of it. Here in the vision of the seer recorded in the closing book of the Bible, a mighty angel came down from Heaven clothed with a cloud and with a rainbow on his head. His face shone like the sun, indicating the radiant interest he felt in the work he was to undertake. He stood ready for the widest usefulness, his right foot upon the land and his left foot upon the sea. In his hand as the main instrument of his power "he had a little book open."

He was to achieve his results by instruction, persuasion and the moral appeal of the truth.

We are not told what sort of a book it was, but I feel sure that it was neither a grammar nor a trigonometry. It was a good book no doubt, probably the best book upon which the angel could lay his hand. I like to think of that book as containing perhaps in compact, usable form the more vital truths of our Bible.

It was "a little book" easily within the compass of the ordinary layman's time and interest. It was no huge, musty, leather-bound octavo filled with ancient wisdom which might appeal to a technical scholar, but would repel the average reader. It was not nearly so large, I fancy, as that complete volume which contains all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The ordinary Bible with its sixty-six books standing as the remains of a yet wider literature could hardly be called "a little book."

This more compact volume which the angel held in his hand as he made his approach to the moral life of the race may have comprised only those more essential teachings of the scriptures. It may have presented in usable form those vital truths standing out free and clear from the historical remainders of points of view long since abandoned by growing knowledge. It may have offered a concise statement of those divine truths which do make men wise unto salvation and furnish them thoroughly for all good work.

The little book holding the net result of wise, patient, discriminating scholarship would be used by the intelligent layman as the larger collection with which we are familiar is not being used in these busy, overcrowded days.

He would not be repelled by pages filled with long catalogues of meaningless names nor by whole chapters of minute directions touching a ritual of worship long since obsolete, nor by the confusing discussion of ideas and practices which have entirely receded from common interest. In that little book he would find looking out at him from every page those words which are "spirit and life," those principles which are a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, those visions of truth which cause men to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

We may be sure that little good is accomplished by viewing the whole Bible "as a talisman miraculously given and divinely authoritative in every part." There are uninstructed people who fall into the way of regarding the Bible as having a kind of magical efficacy. They feel that it is prudent for a house or a ship or a lodge of Masons to have a Bible aboard—it is better than a horseshoe over the door.

When I was a pastor in Cincinnati thirty-odd years ago my neighbor's little daughter died. The members of the family were irreligious people but they asked me to conduct a funeral service. A few days later the father told me that he felt that they had been doing wrong in living all those years without a Bible in the house, that perhaps the death of the little girl had been a judgment on them for their careless neglect. It seemed a strange interpretation to put upon Divine Providence but it was not an occasion for theological discussion.

He was ready to right the wrong which he felt had been done and he asked me to go with him to a bookstore to select and purchase a Bible. I suggested one of convenient size with legible type, something like the one which I use at my own desk. He preferred a larger one,

a big family Bible with clasps and a place in the middle for a family record and photographs. He wanted one which would lie conspicuously on his center table so that, as he said, "everyone who came in would see that he had a Bible in the house." There were two which attracted him, one for eleven dollars and one for fourteen. The latter was fully four pounds the heavier. He finally selected the larger one—he was willing to pay the extra three dollars for the sake of having a Bible that much more cumbersome and inaccessible. It was not "a little book"—it was a big, imposing volume, which even an angel could scarcely have held in his hand open.

More people would use the Bible and use it to better purpose if they had at hand a selected Bible, the book within the book, which would not include all that is found in the entire collection. Children surely would fare better. Some of the unclean stories in the Old Testament about Lot and Amnon, some of the cursing psalms where the writer blesses the man who will take the little ones of his enemy and dash their brains out against a stone, some of the bitter, cynical sayings of the author of Ecclesiastes, some of the low, imperfect moral standards of an undeveloped age, might well be omitted from the little book. They are not good for children and they have little value for the average adult. In a complete account of the whole historical process by which we have this heavenly treasure of divine truth in this earthen vessel, all that raw material would have to go in. The painstaking scholar could not make up a final verdict upon the religious development there recorded without it. But for the rest of us, that little book containing only the more vital, essential, usable portions of scripture would secure better results.

If we had the wit and grace to select and compile such a volume, the scriptures would enter upon a new day of usefulness in a wider ministry to the spiritual life of multitudes of people. We have already in print some worthy attempts along that line. The best of them all, in my judgment, is "The Soul of the Bible," compiled by Ulysses S. Peirce. Here in brief compass is the best of the Bible in the best of all translations for popular use, the King James version, which has a music and rhythm unequaled in any of the other versions! The young people especially fare better and find more profit with such a little book in their hands than they would if they attempted to read through in order the entire sixty-six books of the Bible as a kind of pious pilgrimage, like a trip to Mecca for a faithful Moslem, or the climbing of the Holy Staircase at Rome by a devout Catholic. We honor the Bible most when we use it aright.

When I was twelve years old I was offered ten dollars if I would read the Bible through in course. It was a lot of pocket money to hold before the eyes of a boy and I started in bravely, working it off at the rate of two chapters a day. I got along fairly well with Genesis and Exodus, which are in narrative form, though I wondered about some of the queer stories I encountered. But when I struck Leviticus, with its endless detailed directions to the priests as to how the sacrifices were to be prepared in accordance with the ritual of worship in that ancient religion, and then Numbers, with the long lists of unpronounceable names, holding about as much of interest and profit for a twelve-year-old as would a book of Logarithms, I gave it up once for all. I felt that it would be easier to earn that ten dollars in some other way. And it was altogether best for me at that period that I should

give it up. A little book in my hand might have enlisted an early and profitable interest in the scriptures.

The little book in the hand of the angel was open, wide open. The whole approach to this literature, if it is to have permanent value, must be frank and honest. Let there be no peeping around the corner, no intellectual shuffling when we undertake to ascertain and declare the meaning of this book! "Interpret the Bible as you would any other book," Benjamin Jowett of Oxford used to say. It shocked some of the pious people of that day but it has come to be a commonplace of all respectable interpretation.

The one question to be kept to the fore is "What are the facts?" What do these several statements really mean? If God has allowed certain things to happen in His world and has allowed His inspired servants to write accounts of them, we may be sure that we shall not upset the Ark of the Covenant or overthrow the cause of righteousness by seeking to understand them just as they are.

"We have this treasure," Paul says, "in earthen vessels." We have here a genuine revelation from God which is able to give us reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness and make us wise unto salvation, but it is all embedded in an actual historic process. It is more accurate to speak of the Bible as the record of an inspired movement rather than to speak of it as an inspired book. The divine inbreathing took place within the minds and hearts of men rather than upon the pages of print. The Bible is the record of the progressive revelation which God made of Himself through the religious experiences of a people chosen for their moral receptiveness and spiritual insight.

In view of the fact that it is the record of an actual historical process we shall expect to find in the earlier stages of that process the imperfect moralities of Lot and Samson, of Jephtha and Esther, as well as the open vision of the later and riper servants of God. And critical scholars, who follow the historical method of study and interpretation, are seeking to discover and disentangle that which is local, temporary and incidental from that which is universal, abiding and essential. They are doing this work, wherever they are worthy to be called Biblical scholars, with open minds and honest hearts in the interests of truth and faith and love. And that is about all there is in this "bugaboo" which is supposed to lurk within "the higher criticism."

We have the highest authority for using the Bible with discrimination. Jesus did. One night he and his disciples came to a small Samaritan village which refused them entertainment because of the religious prejudice existing between Jews and Samaritans. The disciples were angry. "Shall we call down fire?" James and John said. "Shall we call down fire, as Elijah did, and burn them up?" They had scriptural precedent for it, according to the narrative given in the book of Kings.

But Jesus swept all that aside and rebuked them for their vindictive mood. "Ye know not what spirit ye are of! The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." So they went on to another village which would entertain them, without calling down vengeance on the narrow-minded little town. All those Old Testament precedents, standards and conceptions are subordinate to the mind that was in Christ, and with that norm before us we too are to make the necessary discriminations.

The part of the Bible which each man uses and applies to his own life becomes the real Bible to him. He makes up his own "little book" by picking and choosing what he will read. A college student once came home at vacation and shocked his conservative parents by expressing doubts as to the historical character of the Book of Jonah. The father combatted all notion of "parable" and "allegory" upon the usual grounds. He staked the authority of Christ upon the historical character of the story about the whale on the strength of that familiar reference in the 12th Chapter of Matthew. But the two theological combatants could not come to any agreement.

A year later the son returned again from college and his father expressed the hope that further study had brought him a saner view of the Bible. The discussion about Jonah was resumed and finally the boy exclaimed, "What difference does it make? There is no book of Jonah in your Bible anyway." The father was shocked and he hastened to bring out his well-worn King James version to disprove the wicked assertion. He hunted and hunted through the Minor Prophets, never quite sure as to the precise order in which they come, until he was forced to admit that he had been using daily a Bible in which the Book of Jonah had no place. The Book of Jonah covers only a single leaf and the year before when the son was at home he had cut that leaf out and had carried it away. The devout father had used his beloved copy of the scriptures for the whole twelve months with no sense of loss and without ever discovering the absence of Jonah.

Many of the famous battlegrounds of scripture, over which men have argued until they were red in the face, have been upon soil which religious people rarely culti-

vate and where the yield of spiritual result is meager. The account of the sun standing still, the story of the man who caused the axhead to swim in the pool of water, the narrative of the three young men who walked unhurt in a blast furnace and other similar passages occur to us all. Here indeed are moral lessons of value, in pictorial form as best suited to the spiritual childhood of the race in that far off time. But we are wasting our breath when we argue for the literal exactness of all these narratives as records of fact. There are many passages in the Bible which have unusual value for the history of ideas but they are not equally valuable for the history of outward occurrence. The wise man discriminates as he holds in his hands the little book wide open.

The best results follow where the use of the Bible is both intelligent and habitual. It cannot be read once for all and then thrown aside as if it were a popular tale. The little book which the heavenly messenger had in his hand was of such convenient size that it could be carried in the pocket. It could be always at hand. The man who forms the habit of having this little book within reach can be putting into his mind the best material to be found in print for the enrichment and strengthening of the inner life. He finds himself in touch with the orations attributed to Moses and Isaiah, with the songs of the psalmist and the proverbs of the wise men, with the reasoning of Job and the letters of Paul; and, best of all, he finds himself in touch with the mind of Him who spake as never man spake. "Every God-breathed writing" here contained he finds "profitable" for the varied forms of moral effort. He roams through these sacred pages gathering "the finest of the wheat," here thirty, there sixty,

now and then a hundred fold in spiritual return. The quality, the variety, the abundance of his spiritual food, are such that he is steadily built up, through faith and hope and love, into the fullness of the stature of perfect manhood in Christ Jesus his Lord.

However it came about, the world has not succeeded in rearing up Christian men and women who are largely, steadily and nobly useful except as they are fed and well fed on scripture. In the culture of the spirit there is a certain primacy in the scriptures. The Bible is a classic, as the works of Beethoven, of Raphael, of Shakespeare, are classics in the realm of music, of art and of letters. If we are to have men of large faith, effective in prayer, able to stand in the hour of trial, broadly and evenly useful in all forms of Christian effort, devout in spirit, bearing with them wherever they go the atmosphere of God's holy presence, we must have men whose habit is like that of the one who comes before us with a little book in his hand open.

It is not a book for clergymen alone, where they find in abundance texts for their sermons. The men who live on the moral frontiers where right and wrong meet six days in the week and fight to the death; the men who bear the burden and anxiety of many a hard day in commercial and civic life; the men who are tempted to sing their life song in a lower key than it was meant to be sung; the men who are liable to close up, becoming hard, sordid, material—all these men need habitual conference with a book which calls upon them to stand up before the most searching principles, gives them the challenge of heroic ideals, summons them to try conclusions with the purposes of God.

In the beauty of its literary form, in the terse vigor of its moral statement, in the depth of its spiritual insight, in the sweep of its vision, in a certain divine something which lifts us for the hour out of our lower selves into our real selves, the Bible stands supreme among all the books. If any one has any doubt about it let him try it. Let the Bible stand or fall, not by the strength of some ecclesiastical dogma as to its inerrancy, but solely by the hard test of use.

The man who has not learned to know and to love, to be guided and to be reënforced by the contents of this book, will show a wide gap in his training and culture. If he would "enter into life," in the highest sense, he had best read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the best that is herein contained! Let him study to show himself approved unto God, a workman who knows his way about, rightly utilizing these words of truth. Let him bind its promises as frontlets between his eyes and write its precepts upon the doorposts of his house. "As well imagine a man with a taste for sculpture not cultivating it with the help of Roman or Greek art, or a man with a sense of poetry not cultivating it with the help of Homer and Shakespeare, as a man with the sense of conduct not cultivating that by the help of the Bible."

Here in Wilmot's "Summer Time in the Country" is a picture of two Englishmen reading the Bible. One of them was an Archbishop who suffered for years from ill health. Near the close of his life he asked one afternoon that his invalid chair might be drawn nearer to the west window. There in the soft, warm light of the setting sun he read from the scriptures, with the aid of his own ripe scholarship, a message from God to his own soul.

The other man was a naturalist. He was sitting one

summer evening with his family out on the lawn, watching the fireflies and glowworms. The hour came for evening prayers. He drew from his pocket a small Bible, caught two of the glowworms and by placing them at either end of the verse he read by their soft green light the evening lesson. His family sat there in the dark and heard these familiar words "How manifold are thy works, O God! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The whole earth is full of thy glory." One verse would stand out while the rest of the passage was dark, but by moving the glowworms from verse to verse the entire lesson stood revealed.

You may not be able, as a layman, to read this little book with the large, ripe scholarship of an Archbishop. Read it with the glowworm light of your own appreciation of its beauty and meaning. As your mind moves from verse to verse, from chapter to chapter, from book to book, more light will fall. And the net result will be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path, guiding you ever in the way that goeth upward.

VI

THE HOPE OF FUTURE LIFE

WE have seen, as a result of the Great War, the emergence of a deeper, warmer interest in a future life. It could not be otherwise. Here were millions of men, not old men, with whom the day was far spent, but young men, strong, virile, hopeful, facing death daily and hourly as the commonest of occurrences! Here were the fathers and mothers, the wives and the sweethearts of those young men waiting and watching, knowing that any moment might bring a message which would blot out all the stars in their sky! Here were eleven millions of newly-made graves opened to receive the bodies of young men killed in the war! Eleven millions of them, a whole population suddenly transferred from earth to a world unseen!

Where are those young men now? What are they doing? Are they still alive? In the face of the bewildering experiences through which the world has just passed we cannot wonder that thoughtful, affectionate people everywhere are asking with an added wistfulness that question which fell from the lips of Job, "If a man die shall he live again?"

The wide reading of such books as Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond"; the more active interest in the proceedings of

the Society for Psychical Research; the crowds of hungry-hearted people going openly or covertly to the mediums or psychics, hoping to peep through some keyhole into that unseen world; the millions of religious people reading afresh with increased concern those passages of Scripture which bear upon the life to come—all this testifies to a wide quickening of interest in this subject. The questions which the Apostle raised nineteen centuries ago, "How are the dead raised? With what body do they come?" are being asked to-day with a new insistence.

It would be difficult to name a more vital or pertinent line of inquiry at this time. Have all those brave young lives been wiped off the slate of existence? Are we here to round out our three score years and ten, or if by reason of strength four score years, and then cease to be? Or have we the chance of going on in the fulfillment of some vaster purpose? Does the weariness of the afternoon of life, and the fast approaching evening mean a time of rest and reawakening to a brighter to-morrow, or does it mean the approach of endless night?

Here is a mind, eager, active, tireless in its pursuit of truth and in the steady relating of that truth to the interests of life! Here is a heart, finely attuned to personal aspiration and to the sense of social duty! Here is a life in its totality, already become through disciplined effort heavily and capably responsible for the well-being of the race! Can any one believe that it makes very little difference whether the common feeling is that there is no further work to be done by such a person, that this finest form of energy known to the mind of man "fitted to such high and sacred uses" is to be cut off from all possibility of further service by the accident we call death, or whether the common feeling is that what we see here is only the

beginning of a service which is to have no end, that such a life is candidate for a destiny which will enable it to outlast and outshine the stars? To raise such a question in the presence of the serious-minded is to answer it. By any conceivable sort of appraisal it makes a tremendous difference!

This hope of "something after death" enlarges and extends our whole conception of the worth and significance of human life. It carries the mind of the race out to the frontiers of earthly experience and bids it look ahead with high confidence. It calls upon men to gain a more complete sense of the strength and wealth of their being as they behold the full capacity of personal existence under a broad, overarching and beneficent sky. It summons them to "see life steadily and to see it whole" as being able in its victorious march to overcome the apparent defeat it suffers in the physical dissolution we call death.

When this august question of living again is raised, some minds are ready with a prompt, flat denial. "There is nothing in it," they say. "This present life is all there is. Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die, and that is the end of everything." I cannot hold with them.

Others are uncertain—with them it is a case of suspended judgment. They have "the will to believe" and the wish to believe, but they feel no sure confidence. They are saying to themselves and to their fellows,

> "Oh, yet we trust that somehow good
> Shall be the final goal of ill,
> That nothing walks with aimless feet
> That not one life shall be destroyed
> Or cast as rubbish to the void
> When God hath made the pile complete."

They "faintly trust the larger hope," but with the emphasis on "faintly." I feel that there is something better for us all than this uncertain groping.

There are yet others who move forward in high, serene confidence. When the question is asked, "If a man die, shall he live again? they vote "Yes" with both hands up. They face the fact of physical dissolution, firmly believing that personal consciousness survives that change. And they are not all empty-headed enthusiasts unable to distinguish between fancy and fact. They are, millions of them, sober-minded men and women, accustomed to weigh evidence and to bring all claims to the bar of reason. I do hold with them, and I believe that the ages to come will set the seal of approval upon the validity of their hope. I am here to indicate briefly, but clearly I trust, the main grounds upon which I base that faith.

Let me first ask how far this expectation rests upon evidence which would be accepted in a court of law. Here we come upon a bewildering mass of testimony. It is offered by men who profess to have been in actual communication with those who once walked the earth but are now unmistakably alive in a world unseen. We are invited to witness the tipping of tables and mysterious handwriting upon slates. We are called upon to listen to strange rappings and to whispered messages from those we have loved and lost. During the last two years the publishers have been grinding out a generous grist of books and magazine articles dealing with these phenomena. All this has come because there are so many people in the world to-day who "long for the touch of a vanished hand, for the sound of a voice that is still."

We find those who would brush all such testimony aside

as being "incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial." They are confident that in every case it is the product either of unconscious delusion or of deliberate fraud. But when "such men as Henry Sidgwick, Arthur J. Balfour, F. W. H. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, William James, James H. Hyslop and William Crookes—to name only a few—have asserted after many years of investigation and study that here at least is a great psychological problem on the solution of which may depend the most vital interests of mankind, one might suppose that the policy of ridicule or of sullen silence on the part of the dogmatic materialist would not avail; and that sooner or later he will be forced to face the evidence and to offer some coherent, intelligible and acceptable interpretation of it." It is only just to listen with open minds to what such men may have to report; and no one would speak lightly of the comfort and assurance which many people have undoubtedly received in this way.

I am frank to say that in my own investigation of these claims I have never seen with my own eyes or heard with my own ears what other men claim to have seen and heard. I am reluctant to credit the full report which some of them make. The three considerations which weigh most heavily with me against the validity of their testimony are these:

First, the character of the methods employed by these departed spirits in seeking to establish communications with their loved ones here. My dear mother passed away seven years ago. I was her only son, and for more than fifty years we were comrades. We read the same books; we cherished the same fundamental interests; we looked to the same abiding sources for motive and stimulus; we

enjoyed a perpetual interchange of thought and feeling. For more than half a century she was the strongest, the sweetest, the holiest earthly influence which entered into the molding of my life.

Now she is gone! If it were possible for her to come back and have a word with me I feel confident that she would. I am here with a mind eager and responsive to any such approach. But if she came I find it difficult to believe that she would seek out some dark, dingy room in the back parlor of a professional medium—that was not the sort of acquaintance she cultivated when she was here. If I learned anything of her disposition during those fifty years, I am inclined to think that she would come to me in the church where I worship, or in my study at Yale where I do my work, or in my home where my final interest lies. And if she should come, I cannot believe that she would resort to table tipping or to mysterious rappings or to the fantastic movements of a Ouija board to manifest her presence and wishes. That was not her way when I knew her. The main methods employed by those who make a business of seeking communication with the unseen world do not commend themselves to me as reasonable.

It may be that there are in the world certain natures possessed of unusual capacity for detecting and making response to the approach of these departed spirits. To one man may be given five talents of sensitiveness, to another two, to another one. We have gifts differing according to the grace given us. I am not here to file any dogmatic denial as to the possibility of such communication with a world unseen—I am only asserting that to me the evidence thus far offered as to the fact of this interchange of thought and feeling with departed souls does not seem convincing.

"We desire proof in this matter and sometimes seek it

in dubious ways through some sort of evidence of the senses which would enable us to rest our faith on authority. But for most of us the age of authority in that sense is past. If we are to have convictions about the unseen world and the unknown future, we cannot accept them on the bare testimony of those who claim to have seen what lies beyond the perception of common men. Even for our hope of life after death, we must find grounds in human nature and points of contact in our own experience, if we are to justify belief. We must look within not without for our evidence."

In the second place, the trivial character of the communications themselves makes against their credibility. So far as I have been able to ascertain, nothing of permanent value in science or in religion has ever been received from these spirits in the other world. During the Great War those who professed to be in direct communication with the soldiers who had been killed in battle learned nothing about the movements or the purposes of the enemy, such as might have been expected from a superhuman source. The messages which have come by this strange route have been, as a rule, trivial and commonplace. "It is very beautiful here. We are very happy here. Be good and love Jesus and He will bring you here." Some of the veriest old rakes have been credited with the most amazing reports as to the satisfactory status upon which they have already entered. Has there been proclaimed in that better world such a suspension of even-handed justice?

Now if this sentimental chitchat is to be taken as a fair sample of the moods and interests of that future world, many high-minded people will straightway lose the desire

for it. If these communications are all that some of the wisest and best of earth can send back from the vantage ground of that heavenly country upon which they have entered, it raises a serious doubt in our minds as to whether we have been in communication with the wisest and best in that upper world.

Furthermore, the steady advance of psychological investigation has already explained on scientific grounds many of the puzzling phenomena formerly adduced by the spiritists as proof positive of communication with the departed. The establishment of the fact of telepathy and a clearer understanding of the methods employed by highly sensitive natures in securing knowledge by these more subtle methods has greatly reduced the area of mystery. Upon those people who once walked and worked in darkness there has shone a great light. The necessity and the occasion for reference to superhuman agencies, in order to explain certain occurrences, have been steadily reduced by the extension of a competent psychology. There are certain facts of which much has been made by professional mediums and psychics which we no longer see through a glass darkly—we see them face to face and understand them, even as we are understood.

We would all rejoice to believe that the main claims of the Spiritists were true. It would go far toward bringing that unseen world upon the map. It would lift this larger hope out of the realm of moral faith and place it once for all upon a scientific basis. If we could send and receive wireless messages to and from that continent of being, which lies below the horizon of ordinary consciousness, it would at once render the life immortal intensely real. It would enable each of us to live thenceforth "by

the power of an endless life." The veil would be lifted so that all might share in the vision of the seer and behold the dead, small and great, standing before God.

But the evidence thus far available does not, in my judgment, warrant that claim. The hope of continued existence beyond the grave is still a venture of faith. It is a venture made not merely in the interests of a further and higher form of happiness for mankind—it is a venture made in the interests of an immense strengthening of motive for right living and for sacrificial effort on behalf of our fellows. It is a venture made in the interest of more august sanctions for righteousness and more powerful deterrents from evil. But when all has been said which can be said as to the immediate value of such a hope, the hard fact stands that the grounds for the expectation that this mortal will put on immortality lie within the realm of moral faith rather than upon the plane of demonstrated truth.

I rest my own confidence in the life to come mainly upon these two great faiths, my faith in the worth of man and my faith in the integrity of God. Here are the two arms of my trust—they spring from my confidence in the essential worth of man as the summit of created being and from my confidence in the character of God as the Source and Summit of all being!

I believe in the validity of human desire at its best. Can any one name a single human desire which is normal, widespread and persistent which does not have standing over against it a corresponding satisfaction? If all men hunger, there is food for them. If they all want to breathe, there is air in abundance. If they all have the instinct of sex, there is another sex standing over against

them with corresponding instincts. If they all have the desire for knowledge and the taste for beauty, there is an ordered, intelligible universe and a world rich in beauty awaiting the approach of these finer faculties. The great world-order answers to our need.

The desire must be normal, not some morbid, unhealthy craving. It must be widespread, not the scattered possession of an eccentric few. It must be persistent, not the passing fad or fancy of a single season, but enduring from generation to generation. And when it is thus normal, widespread and persistent, the universe where we find ourselves keeps tryst with it, holding in reserve the appropriate satisfaction. The Creator has a way of keeping His word with the best He has awakened in human aspiration. The old sage had it right—"Wherever God sends mouths, he sends meat."

It matters not how you may account for the existence of that desire. You may say in pious fashion that a wise Creator implanted it originally, knowing that He would also supply the appropriate satisfaction. You may in more scientific mood insist that the desire itself was called into being by the external stimulus in the environment where the organism found itself. In either case, the argument holds. The integrity of the great order which enfolds us is such that it does not send these normal, widespread and persistent desires upon fools' errands. It does not permit them to lead men into blind alleys. It does not call them into action only to mock them with cruel disappointment. It holds in reserve the realities which match those needs.

And the converse of the principle here suggested also holds true—organisms do not make response normally, widely, persistently to imaginary forms of stimulus. In

the long run and over vast areas they answer only to reality.

Now the desire to live on after death and to have those we love live on is normal. I have it. You have it. So has the man across the aisle, and the man on the other side of the globe. It is widespread—the sun never sets upon that empire of hope. When we go far afield, turning back to the religious beliefs of the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, this desire is there in its full strength. When we come down to the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Romans, it is there:

> "It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well—
> Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality."

And the desire persists from age to age, knitting up the centuries into a mighty trust that humanity will not go down in final defeat before the physical experience which men call death. Why not trust the integrity of the universe here? Why not credit the veracity of this normal, widespread, persistent desire of humanity when it is at its best?

How strongly men have resented the idea of personal extinction! Let those mighty monuments of Egypt testify on this point! "The Pyramids mark the culmination of the belief in material equipment as completely efficacious in securing felicity for the dead. The great Pyramids of Gizeh represent the effort of titanic energies absorbing all the resources of a great state as they converge upon one supreme endeavor to sheath eternally the body of a single man in a husk of masonry so colossal that by these purely material means the royal body might defy all time and

by sheer force of mechanical supremacy make conquest of mortality."

It may be objected that the desire for future life is *not* universal, that there are those who express a positive distaste for endless existence, who find relief in the thought that "after life's fitful fever" man sleeps well with no disturbing prospect of an awakening. But may not this professed reluctance to live on endlessly be merely the natural and wholesome reaction from the sort of future life pictured by a conventional and narrow-minded piety?

"How empty and shallow," William Adams Brown has said, "the heaven to which we have often been asked to look forward! A heaven of untroubled bliss with nothing to achieve, and nothing to anticipate; a heaven freed from suffering indeed, but freed also from the struggle of which suffering is born; a heaven in which there is nothing to do but to enjoy year after year, æon after æon, a monotonous eternity." From all such heavens, Good Lord deliver us!

It is not the desire for a bare continuance of personal consciousness which I am here urging as possessed of high significance. It may be doubted if the desire for such a meager form of prolonged existence is normal, widespread, and persistent. The craving is for a certain type of consciousness which by its worth and beauty enlists the interest and awakens the hope of the race. It is significant that these two great words fell from the same pair of lips and emanated from the same mind, capable of an accurate appraisal both of the content and of the prospects of human existence—"I am the resurrection and the life, whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"; and "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

It is life we want, but it must be life which is life indeed,

life abundant, life eternal, if it is to command our desire. The life of one dimension, namely length, even though that length were endlessly prolonged, would not enlist our interest. The life desired must have in it the height of unflagging and unfulfilled aspiration, the breadth of interest, and of action made possible by growth and advance, the depth of conviction and of purpose needed to sustain this fullness of being. There must be opportunity for self-expression in worthy action, for the interchange of finer forms of influence in a vast fellowship of souls, for progress in all those lines of development which bring the sense of worth and peace. When the future world is thus conceived, we may believe that the number of those who would draw back reluctant to enter upon such a state would become negligible.

Moreover, this sense of permanence in life is a necessary demand of the moral nature of mankind. Raphael would not have expressed the utmost of his artistic genius in painting the "Sistine Madonna" had he believed that some vandal would tear his canvas to shreds the moment he finished it. He knew that it would hang in some place of honor as a thing of beauty through the centuries. Beethoven would not have expressed the utmost of his musical genius in composing the Fifth Symphony or the Ninth had he believed that the score would be destroyed as soon as he had completed it. He knew that it would go singing its way down the ages. The masters of literary expression would not have given us "Hamlet," "Faust," or the "Divine Comedy" had they believed that their manuscripts would go unread to their destruction. And in the moral field, men and women, taking them in the large, become "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the

work of the Lord," just in proportion as they become persuaded that their "labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Here and there some choice soul with a rare inheritance and exceptional surroundings may show a splendid measure of moral energy and of genuine aspiration without this hope. But one such swallow does not make a summer, nor twenty such swallows. Take all the swallows! We know full well that plain men and women the world over are bearing the heat and burden of many a hard day; they are ministering faithfully and lovingly to the needier lives about them; they are forgetting the things which are behind and reaching for the things which are ahead; they are striving to bring their conduct "up to the style and manner of the sky" because they feel assured that the results of their work in character-winning and in character-building will last. The hope of "something after death" for themselves and for those they would serve, the sense of permanence in life, uncovers deeper sources of motive and stimulus; it steadies and strengthens the will; it sets their feet more firmly in the way that goeth upward.

The moral nature demands this sense of permanence in life for its own inner sustenance. Compare the moral fruitage of that shallow philosophy of life which says, "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die and come to the end of it all," with the moral fruitage of that serene trust which holds that our labor is not in vain in the Lord! Look out broadly upon the moral history of mankind! Where do we find the saints and the seers, the heroes and the martyrs, the spiritual leaders and the great reformers! Do we find them with this hope or without it? Do we find them voting "Yes," or voting "No," when the question is asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

We all know where they stand. And we also know full

well that men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles. They do not gather the best moral results over wide areas or through long periods of time, from silly delusions or from foolish errors. They gather these best results from the truth. The tree of truth brings forth good fruit, while the false and evil claim will not and cannot, widely and persistently, bring forth anything but evil fruit. Therefore, because I believe in human nature, I believe that this normal, widespread and persistent desire for "something after death" will not fail of its satisfaction.

I believe in the life to come because I believe in God. I find sufficient warrant for believing that He is a Being powerful, wise, beneficent. He is above all and through all and in us all. Now it is unthinkable but that this Judge of all the earth should do right. He cannot be Judge of all the earth on any other terms.

But has He done right if this life is all there is? Has He done right if vice and crime are to go oftentimes undetected and unpunished, if outraged virtue is not to be vindicated and rewarded? Has He done right where fidelity to duty has been burned at the stake, and tenacity of moral purpose has been broken on the wheel, while successful villainy has lived on mocking the appeal for justice? Has He done right if He leaves us with this mass of unreason and injustice upon our hands unexplained and unexplainable, unless there are further pages of human history to be unrolled and read in a world unseen? Has He done right if He leaves His own moral accounts with the race sadly in arrears?

No man in his right mind can believe that He has. His own sense of reason and justice demands for Him a further opportunity, a broader area for the working out of

His purposes of mercy and truth. The character of the Eternal is at stake.

More than that, I am encouraged by the highest spiritual authority in history to believe that God is a Father. Could any man that is a father take his own children and thrust them away into eternal nothingness, if it lay within his power to keep them alive? How much less then could He from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named? How could He thrust away into nothingness generation after generation of believing and aspiring men and women in the very hour when they were looking up to Him in confident trust?

It may be suggested that no earthly father possessed by an honest affection for his children would suffer them to undergo such pain and distress as we can readily discover in this present world. But it is conceivable that all the struggles and trials to which humanity is here exposed may find their moral justification in a certain disciplinary and educative value as yet imperfectly understood. The entire world-process in certain aspects of its life "groaneth and travaileth together in pain even until now" waiting for something to declare its deeper meaning. "Waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God!" Waiting for that higher type of human character, slowly wrought out ofttimes in agony and bloody sweat, to emerge and take control of the governable elements in that world process in the interest of the spiritual ends for which it was originally designed.

In that event the high goal reached at last by the heirs of the promise would vindicate the purpose of the One who ordained the rough road to be traveled by those who would gain the supreme spiritual achievement. No movement, no process can be judged by the rude and lowly stable

where it is born nor by the steep, hard way it may traverse in that period of discipline when obedience is learned by the things suffered. Let it be judged in every case by the throne which it is finally able to ascend!

The prospect of life eternal where souls have been washed white in the stress and pain of sacrificial effort enables us to face the afflictions of this present world undaunted, finding there no lasting contradiction to our faith that the character of the One who is ultimately responsible is paternal. But if the spirits of just men, made brave and true by their heroic struggle against the adverse forces they had to face, are remorselessly blotted out, as soon as they have gained a fair measure of worth and peace, what possible justification can be named for the severe discipline they have undergone! What possible reconciliation can be suggested for the world as we find it with the character of an Infinite Father unless we posit, as the final outcome of all this stress, some worthy goal.

There was once an Arab sheik, who became convinced that the terrible deity he worshiped had commanded him to bury his beautiful daughter alive. He made known his conviction to the girl, and with that extravagant filial respect characteristic of the Orient, she consented to be sacrificed. He dug the grave with his own hands. He took the fair young girl in his arms to thrust her down into the pit to be buried alive. But at that moment she noticed that in digging the grave a piece of moist earth had clung to his long white beard, which is the pride of the Arab heart; and she stretched forth her hand to remove it as a final act of affection. Her deed of love so touched the heart of the old fanatic that he spared her life and carried her back to his home. Deity or no deity, he could not thrust away a love like that!

What then shall we say as to the feelings of the Infinite Father, were He ceaselessly engaged in wiping off of the slate of existence the children of his care in the very hour when they were looking up into His face in faith and hope and love!

It is a sound principle of judgment in theology that what is normal and praiseworthy in man at his best will be found to be true in God. He has made us potentially in His likeness and image. The Master built his claim of a divine redemption upon the natural instinct of a shepherd to recover the missing members of his flock, upon the healthy impulse of a prudent woman to recover the lost coin to her purse, upon the inevitable outreach of a father's affection toward a wayward son in a far country. He built his faith in prayer upon the sure action of a father in giving bread and fish and eggs to his hungry children. With that same high confidence in our essential kinship with Him we may well believe that the human desire to have our dear dead live on is matched by the will of our Maker that it shall be so.

> "Thou wilt not leave us in the dust.
> Thou madest man, he knows not why,
> He thinks he was not made to die,
> And Thou hast made him—Thou art just!"

If I were firmly convinced that I was doomed to extinction at death, I suppose that I should be able to stand it. I would have to stand it. And when that frightful decree had been executed upon me and upon you, and upon all those we hold dear, we would know nothing whatever about what we had lost. But He would know—could He stand it? He would have to live on conscious of the tragedy of human existence leading only to final extinction! Let the

heart speak, as well as the head, in the Great Assize! Let your own sense of what would be just and right in Him, who is the Author and Summit of all being, utter its verdict! "The wrong that pains my soul below, I dare not throne above."

If conscious and aspiring human souls are not to be kept in existence, if the whole human race is finally to be destroyed by the cruel hand of death, what possible object can be named which the Author of the world order as we know it could have had in view? "Evolution has been a long and painful process, in which man has slowly advanced to self-consciousness and freedom. When we are asked the meaning of this development we seem to find the answer in man—man who emerges from the heart of the great world process; who advances slowly from natural to ethical and to spiritual life; who learns to follow distant ends and finally form ideals which transcend the world itself. Man is a being of large discourse, whose outlook is not bounded by the earthly horizon and the religious conception of his transcendent destiny is in harmony with human aspirations and ideals."

In the same vein John Fiske gave us this great word. "The more thoroughly we comprehend the process of evolution by which things have come to be as they are, the more we feel that to deny the everlasting persistence of the spiritual element in man would rob the whole process of its meaning. It would go far toward putting us to permanent intellectual confusion. For my part, therefore, I believe in the immortality of the soul, as a supreme act of faith in the reasonableness of God's work."

The chief obstacle which hinders the advance of this hope of future life lies in the inability of many minds to

picture the continuance of personal consciousness when the brain structure, with which that consciousness is so intimately associated, has been destroyed by the slow processes of the cemetery or by the swifter processes of the crematory. But it is a fairly well established principle in modern psychology that the sum of all the physical processes does not give us the fact of consciousness. In every case personal consciousness transcends the physical organism where it resides.

This can be made clear by a simple illustration. With the X-ray I am able to see quite through the flesh which clothes my forearm and to study the two bones and all the hidden articulations of wrist and hand. I note their condition, detect the presence of injury or disease. I can watch their movements under the muscular action which I may initiate. And in all this I am viewing them as something objective to my own consciousness.

Suppose that we had some more powerful and delicate form of X-ray which would enable me to witness those atomic changes and molecular movements in the brain, which accompany my changing emotions! By such aid I could then stand before a mirror and watch the physical changes taking place in the brain when I passed from a mood of anger into one of benign feeling, from a sense of despondency into one of joy and hope. In that case, who would be doing the watching? Not the brain itself, for the brain is the thing which is being watched. It is being observed and studied by an intelligent witness of its movements. What do you call that something which views the brain itself as a thing objective to its immediate consciousness? I call that something "the human soul" which survives the physical change we call death.

The words of Dr. James A. Hadfield, Surgeon in the

British Navy, in the introduction to his "Essay on Immortality," are suggestive: "I propose to bring forward evidence which will encourage us in the belief that in the course of evolution the mind shows an ever-increasing tendency to free itself from physical control and, breaking loose from its bonds, to assert its independence and live a life undetermined except by the laws of its own nature. The tendency of the mind toward independence and autonomy suggests the possibility of its becoming entirely liberated from the body and continuing to live disembodied and free." The steady progress of experimental psychology may in the years which lie just ahead reveal to us the possibility of personal consciousness disassociated from the brain structure with which it seems to have been so intimately bound up. Success at this point would at once roll away that stone and remove that obstacle from the pathway of triumphant hope.

These considerations, which spring from my faith in the validity of human desire at its best and from my confidence in the integrity of the world order in meeting those desires with the appropriate satisfaction, and from my trust in the reason and justice of Him who is responsible for the entire world process, are not offered as proofs that the dead who once walked with us here on earth now walk in newness of life with Him. I do offer them, however, as considerations which must have weight with us when in the absence of any final proof, either positive or negative, we are making up our minds as to whether we will vote Yes or vote No on the question of living again.

My own reliance upon the implications of this faith is vastly reënforced when I reflect upon the fact that Jesus Christ persuaded the sturdy, outdoor men, farmers, fisher-

men, peasants and the like, who had companied with Him, that He was still alive after they had seen Him die upon the Cross. However it came about, Jesus Christ was more of a power along the streets of Jerusalem forty days after his death than he had ever been during his earthly career.

Nothing is more certain than the fact that when those early disciples had seen their Master put to death by the Roman soldiers, they went back to their fishing disheartened. So far as they were concerned, the Christian movement was at an end. "We trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel," they said. But now He had been three days dead, and all their hopes were buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

And nothing is more certain than the fact that something occurred which changed those despairing and disbelieving men into radiant, triumphant witnesses of the Resurrection. They now went everywhere proclaiming their gospel of a Risen Lord, sealing their conviction with their own blood. I have not been able to find any cause adequate to account for that change of front on their part except the fact that Jesus Christ did triumph over death and was able to certify that fact to those who had companied with Him. "He showed Himself alive"—that was their brief, terse, sufficing account of the matter. It was that assurance which furnished the sufficing and enduring basis for the whole Christian movement there inaugurated.

From that hour those early disciples faced the trials and the perils which fell to their lot undaunted. They took life as it came, standing up, heartened and empowered by this robust faith. "Though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We look not at the

things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The great apostle faced the fact that death stands here in the natural order by the divine appointment—"By man came death." From the earliest pages of recorded history and from the mute remains of prehistoric times there comes this unescapable sentence—"It is appointed unto men once to die." It is a universal experience from which none are exempt, rich or poor, wise or simple, innocent or sinful.

But the apostle believed also that victory over death stands just as firmly within the divine appointment—"By man came also the resurrection of the dead." It is the high privilege of human life, made to wear the divine likeness, to transcend these physical limitations. Life as we know it in its best estate is destined to move serenely on its way, personal consciousness surviving the shock of physical dissolution. Life has in it that capacity for endurance which will enable it to show itself masterful and triumphant even in the face of that physical experience which men call death. "By man also comes the resurrection from the dead."

The apostle reached his high confidence in that glorious progress for human existence through his faith in Jesus Christ. To him Jesus Christ was humanity's representative, "the eternal prototype of man lying eternally in the being and purpose of God and actually appearing in a historic personality to vindicate the daring thought of our

essential kinship with the Father." By that man whom he ordained God made known to the world certain great and precious assurances that by these we too might become partakers of the divine nature.

Here was One born of a woman in Bethlehem of Judæa, reared as a child in Nazareth of Galilee, increasing gradually in stature, wisdom and character, tempted in all points as we are and tasting the whole human situation for every man! All these things stand within the divine appointment for man. Then He died upon the Cross where all might see. The third day he showed Himself alive, certifying to all who had eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand that He was still in existence. And the apostle believed that in all this He was the Perfect, the Typal, the Representative Man, the Son of Man. He made bold to assert that even as by man came death, so also by that man Christ Jesus came the resurrection from the dead.

Any one can see how that thought kindled his heart and loosened his tongue as he came to sing his song of hope in that first letter to the Corinthians. It was no mere theory which he had found dimly outlined on some far away cloud. It was not some faint hint of continued existence after death which he had gathered from the vegetable world with its recurring spring time. It was the truth wrought out, as he believed, in terms of human experience. It was a valid, historical, representative fact which he had witnessed. He wrote his letter to the Corinthians in the year fifty-five, only some twenty years after the event, when the majority of those five hundred brethren who had shared with him the direct knowledge of the risen Christ were still alive, as he states, to corroborate his claim. It was when he was holding his ear close to the heart of our com-

mon humanity that he gained this assurance of a life unbroken.

"By man came death"—it is the will of God! It stands within the divine appointment for the race! "By man came also the resurrection of the dead"—this too is the will of God. It stands also within the divine appointment! The book of life begun here, with these familiar chapters of experience which you and I and all men know, is to reach its completion and unfold its deeper meaning in that higher world where a light unclouded shall fall upon its glorious pages of added experience.

This hope of living again receives not proof but confirmation and strengthening when we listen to the testimony of human intelligence at its best. The greatest of the poets and the greatest of the philosophers have all but universally sung and reasoned on the side of this high trust.

It receives further confirmation when we listen to the voice of moral feeling at its best. The great prophets and the founders of historic faiths, entitled surely to offer expert counsel touching the warrant we may feel in cherishing this hope, have put themselves strongly on the side of the angels. The heart as well as the brain has its right to be heard when the verdict is being made up touching the fate of the human soul. Insight may be as competent a witness as eyesight.

This hope is still further strengthened when we listen to the voice of human character at its best. Here was Jesus Christ! Whether or no you share my belief that He was the Son of God in a sense altogether unique, you cannot but admit that he represents the highest achievement in personal character of which we have any record. How

did He bear Himself toward this long and widely cherished hope of living again? His familiar words have been upon our lips since childhood. He never argued—He proclaimed. He never seemed to be feeling His way—He spoke as if He knew. He did not say, "I think, I suppose, I trust that it may be so"—He affirmed His unwavering confidence in a life to come. "The Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory. Before Him shall be gathered all nations. He shall say to those on His right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And these shall go into life eternal."

Even in that dread hour when He hung upon the Cross in physical agony, He was no frightened soul trembling uncertainly on the verge of the unknown. A host had risen against him, but His heart did not fear. Though death was at hand, in this He was confident. He turned to the penitent man at His side, whose own life was fast ebbing away, saying to him confidently, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He looked up into the face of God to say with sure trust, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Here is what the best man who ever lived—not to put it more strongly—believed and felt touching the future! Here is human character on its highest level facing death serene and undaunted! Then He crowned that affirmation by producing speedily in the hearts of those who stood nearest to Him, in the hearts of those who had seen Him die upon the cross, in the hearts of those who in the face of this tragedy upon Calvary had given up all hope and had gone back to their fishing, the unshaken confidence that He was still alive. They went forth in His name to proclaim their gospel of a risen Lord and to seal their con-

viction as to the reality of what they declared with their own blood.

Jesus Christ "brought life and immortality to light" not so much by what He taught—He referred somewhat briefly to the great hope He cherished—He brought life and immortality to light by what He did. After the Roman government, with its customary thoroughness, had put Him to death upon the Cross He made clear to his contemporaries the fact that He had triumphed over death. He stood before His associates saying with an accent which carried to their hearts final conviction, "I am the first and the last, the Living One. I was dead, and, behold, I am alive forever more; and I have the keys of death and the grave." When I see some man looking into a tomb, watching the physical dissolution of the body and saying in regard to any possible continuance of personal consciousness, "It cannot be done," I make reply, "It has been done! He shewed Himself alive."

Our supreme confidence in a future life does not come to us through some strange vision in the sky. It does not come by some ghostly apparition in a darkened room. It comes by another route altogether. It comes as we pierce more deeply into what is originally, intrinsically and eternally human. To believe in immortality is to take on trust the highest there is in our human experience. When human intelligence speaks to us on its highest levels, when human feeling in its purest form voices to us its belief, when personal character in its perfection utters its verdict, they all unite in offering us the sure hope of life after death.

"Why should we fear death," a man once said, "it is life's finest form of adventure?" These words were not

uttered by some minister of religion standing securely in his pulpit on Easter Day, surrounded by flowers and with joyous anthems sounding in his ears. They were not spoken before an open fire at the close of a delightful evening by some man sitting in the easy comfort of his armchair. They were spoken by Charles Frohman on the deck of the *Lusitania* just as the great ship settled to her doom. He felt that all earthly hope was gone, and this was his last word to a group of friends who expected to share his fate. He had never believed in unhappy endings for his plays—he would not have an unhappy ending for his life. "Why should we fear death? It is life's finest form of adventure."

> "So be my passing,
> My task accomplished and the long day done;
> My wages taken and in my heart
> Some late lark singing;
> Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
> The sundown splendid and serene."

When we are young and strong with all our loved ones around us, this earthly life, the mere living of it, may seem quite enough. The thought of a remote future and of that unseen world scarcely finds place upon the map of our ordinary consciousness. But as we grow older and the veins are scant of life, when friends are gone and many of our best ambitions lie unfulfilled, when our too brief chance seems drawing to a close and we are compelled to confess ourselves baffled in many of our dearest hopes, then the life to come is lifted to a place of eager interest and of warm desire.

We are living in a stern, relentless period of the world's history. In the grim presence of a great disaster we know

full well how much evil there is in the world and what havoc it can work when it is let loose in organized form. We know how helpless men are when in the face of all that they rely solely upon their own energy and intelligence.

If huge armaments and secret diplomacy, if the method of ruthless competition (once supposed to be "the life of trade") and the spirit of enlightened self-interest, which short-sighted folk once believed to be competent to point the way of advance, if technical skill and secular education quite divorced from the consecrating influence of religion, had made a glorious success of the civilization which they undertook to supervise and direct, then they might be in a position to speak slightingly of these spiritual forces which we have been studying.

They have not made a glorious success of it—in half the lands of earth they have made a horrible mess of it. They have all but wrecked the white civilization of the race. It is high time for them to sit down and listen, until they hear One saying, as He said nineteen hundred years ago on the shores of Galilee, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden! Take my yoke upon you! Learn of me and ye shall find rest to your souls."

We are called in these days to work out great issues; and the forces of darkness arrayed against the forces of light challenge us to bring into the field that full measure of moral dynamic which only an intelligent and resolute faith can produce. The well-reasoned system of ethics provides a program; it names the various stations along the road to personal and social well-being, but it does not provide the motive power to make the journey. The time table of the Pennsylvania Railroad will show you the route from Columbus, Ohio, to New York City and indicate the names of all the places through which you will pass, but no

one can ride from one city to the other on a time table. Likewise in the journey of life, we are compelled to look to some source higher than a mere ethical program for the necessary dynamic to carry us through to the goal.

Unbelief soon grows tired of itself, distrusts itself, finds its meager, negative philosophy of life unavailing. When Voltaire purchased the Manor House at Ferney, he saw that the parish church had fallen into disrepair. With commendable insight into those forms of influence which make for human betterment, he had it torn down and on his own grounds at his own expense he built them a new church. Over the door of that place of worship and aspiration he had carved this inscription which may be read there to this day,—*"Deo erexit Voltaire."* Voltaire built it for God! Here was another meeting place, where the human spirit might be purified and fortified for its high tasks through fellowship with the divine spirit.

We are told sometimes about the credulous attitude of religious faith! How about the credulity of unbelief? Hear this unblushing bit of dogmatic assumption put forward by unbelief where the unproved assertions are only exceeded by the cold heartlessness of the utterance! This is the gospel, not according to Matthew, Mark or Luke, but the gospel according to Bertrand Russell, in his essay on, "A Free Man's Worship."

"Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving. His origin and growth, his hopes and his fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms. No fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve the individual beyond the grave. All the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon-day

brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system. The whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins. All these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only upon the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built."

What do you think of it as a basis for the rearing of your own life structure? How much confidence have you in its final validity, when the returns from the fields of competent investigation and reflection are all in? How much would you expect from it in the development of personal character and social well-being, if it were put to the test on all these varied fields of human interest?

When our eyes look back upon the splendid achievements of the past it seems impossible to account for them on the basis of "accidental collocations of atoms." It seems an affront to our intelligence to be asked to believe that this age-long progressive development of living forms has been brought about, without any sort of intelligent superintendence and direction in the world order. It is too much to ask of "matter and force" that they should do all these far-sighted things and execute such well-conceived plans, with no sort of conscious purpose at work behind and within all this unthinking material. We are driven to interpret the beginning in the light of the ends achieved.

Over against that counsel of despair, for reasons which a vast body of intelligent, aspiring people deem sufficient to warrant them in adopting another philosophy of life altogether, I would set the firm courage of our Christian faith.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord! I believe in the redemptive power of sacrificial love and in the might of prayer as the conscious, active coöperation of these finite spirits of ours with the Infinite Spirit! I believe in the Bible as the record of the progressive revelation which God has made of Himself through the religious experiences of a people chosen for their spiritual capacity, able to make us wise unto salvation and furnish us with inspiration and guidance for all good work! I believe in the ultimate triumph of righteousness and in life everlasting. In this high confidence we are called to go forth and win.

Here were three men busily engaged with mallet and chisel in a stone quarry! There came a man who had a head on his shoulders and two good eyes in it. He said to the first man, "What are you doing?" The man replied, "I am working here for five dollars a day." He passed on to the second, and said,—"What are you doing?" The man replied, "I am cutting stone." He passed on to the third,—"What are you doing?" This man also had a head on his shoulders—he looked up and said, "I am building a cathedral."

You may, if you choose, spend all your years working for so many dollars a day, or for so many thousand a year, making a living,—it may be a good living,—but never making a life. You may, if you choose, work all your life doing something as honest and as monotonous as cutting stone. You may, if you choose, build cathedrals. And cathedrals, as we all know, are not always built of stone. The cathedral is a meeting place, a place where the divine and the human meet and touch and are mutually enriched. There are cathedrals which are buildings of God, houses

not made with hands, habitations of the Spirit, eternal in the heavens. Let each man by the way he shapes up his own philosophy of life and orders his action, build for himself a cathedral and dwell in it forevermore!

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